

# **ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**

Andrus Hindrek Leonard Nõmm

A thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Commerce in Tourism  
at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

Date: March 12, 2019

## ABSTRACT

*Destination management is undergoing substantial change. Recent literature suggests that current destination management practices, in the context of the global expansion of tourism and volume oriented approaches, are not sustainable. Destination managers are now expected to have a deeper social presence and maintain a balance between the interests of businesses, wider stakeholders, and the host community. Advocacy and community leadership are proposed by both academics and practitioners as destination management functions of the future, enabling the management of tourism destinations in a sustainable and resilient manner. This research builds on a conceptual framework of interdependent destination management functions, focusing on advocacy and community leadership.*

*Two main domains from the destination management literature are reviewed: namely the connection between destinations and their regions, and destination leadership with a focus on advocacy and community leadership. The research adopts a qualitative approach, asking questions from key stakeholders implementing the National Tourism Development Plan, an overarching approach to destination management, in Estonia. Interviews focus on advocacy and community leadership, and how they interconnect with other functions of destination management.*

*The study reveals that advocacy and community leadership act as an interface between a destination and the region it is situated in. These functions help destination managers to maintain their relationships with the host community and wider stakeholder groups. To depict the interrelations between the researched and other functions of destination management, a framework of Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management is developed. Implications of the study for practitioners and researchers are outlined at the end of the thesis.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*I would like to thank several academics and practitioners who all have wholeheartedly supported me throughout this long-awaited, challenging, and rewarding journey.*

*Special thanks go to my current supervisors Dr. Julia N. Albrecht and Professor Brent Lovelock for their continuous support, advice, insightful guidance, and critical reflection.*

*I am grateful to Dr. Heli Tooman from Pärnu College of University of Tartu, who believed in me and encouraged me to embrace this journey.*

*I would also like to acknowledge the invaluable support of various destination management leaders of Estonia for sharing their expertise, insider perspectives, and reflections into advocacy and community leadership.*

*Thank you all for your time, effort, and support!*

*Andrus HL Nõmm*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 BACKGROUND .....	1
1.2 KNOWLEDGE GAP .....	2
1.3 RESEARCH AIMS.....	3
1.4 RESEARCH CONTEXT .....	3
1.5 METHOD .....	4
1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS.....	5
<b>2 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION .....	7
2.2 DESTINATION AND REGION .....	8
2.3 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS.....	10
2.4 INTERDEPENDENCY OF FUNCTIONS IN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT AND DESTINATIONS' INTERFACE WITH ITS REGION .....	12
2.5 SUMMARY .....	15
<b>3 ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP .....</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1 INTRODUCTION .....	16
3.2 DESTINATION LEADERSHIP .....	16
3.3 ADVOCACY.....	20
3.4 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP .....	22
3.5 APPLIED ASPECTS OF DESTINATION LEADERSHIP.....	23
3.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .....	24

3.7	SUMMARY .....	27
<b>4</b>	<b>RESEARCH CONTEXT - ESTONIA .....</b>	<b>29</b>
4.1	INTRODUCTION .....	29
4.2	ESTONIA AND TOURISM.....	29
4.3	TOURISM ORGANISATIONS .....	32
4.4	DESTINATION MANAGEMENT AND NATIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN.....	34
4.5	SUMMARY .....	36
<b>5</b>	<b>METHOD .....</b>	<b>37</b>
5.1	INTRODUCTION .....	37
5.2	METHOD AND RESEARCH PROCESS .....	37
5.3	PARTICIPANT SELECTION.....	40
5.4	DATA COLLECTION – SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS.....	42
5.5	DATA ANALYSIS.....	43
5.6	REFLEXIVITY.....	45
5.7	ETHICAL AND PRACTICAL CONCERNS .....	46
5.8	LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH .....	47
5.9	SUMMARY .....	48
<b>6</b>	<b>RESEARCH FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>50</b>
6.1	INTRODUCTION .....	50
6.2	THEMATIC MIND MAP.....	51
6.3	DESTINATION MANAGEMENT .....	51
6.3.1	THE DESTINATION AND THE REGION IT IS SITUATED IN .....	51
6.3.2	DESTINATION MANAGEMENT .....	54
6.3.3	OPERATIONALISATION OF DESTINATION MANAGEMENT.....	55
6.4	DESTINATION LEADERSHIP .....	57
6.5	COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT .....	58
6.5.1	COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP INTERRELATING TO OTHER DESTINATION MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS.....	61
6.5.2	APPLIED ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP .....	64
6.6	ADVOCACY IN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT .....	66

6.6.1	ADVOCACY INTERRELATING WITH OTHER DESTINATION MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS .....	68
6.6.2	APPLIED ASPECTS OF ADVOCACY .....	70
6.7	SUMMARY .....	72
<b>7</b>	<b>DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>74</b>
7.1	INTRODUCTION .....	74
7.2	DISCUSSION .....	74
7.3	FRAMEWORK REVISITED .....	78
7.4	IMPLICATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH .....	80
7.5	CONCLUSION .....	82
	<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>85</b>
	<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>94</b>
	APPENDIX 1. INTERVIEW GUIDELINE .....	94
	APPENDIX 2. FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS .....	96
	APPENDIX 3. INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS .....	97
	APPENDIX 4. CONSENT FORM .....	99
	APPENDIX 5. APPLICATION FOR UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO ETHICS COMMITTEE.....	101

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1. Framework of interdependent destination management functions (Pearce, 2016b, p.45). .....	14
Figure 3.1. Conceptual Framework of Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management. ....	26
Figure 4.1. Map of Estonia (www.visitestonia.com 16.08.2018). ....	30
Figure 4.2 Overnights by source markets (%) in Estonia, 2017 (source Statistics Estonia via Enterprise Estonia, 2018d). ....	31
Figure 4.3 Accommodation beds, income and nights spent by regions. 2017/2018 (adapted from Enterprise Estonia, 2019). ....	32
Figure 4.4. Organisational chart of tourism bodies in Estonia (adapted from OECD, 2018). ....	33
Figure 4.5. Regional level tourism organisations and destinations (www.visitestonia.com 16.08.2018). ....	34
Figure 5.1. The research and analysis process (adapted from Brotherton, 2015, p.17)..	39
Figure 6.1: Mind map of emerged themes and patterns.....	52
Figure 6.2. Community leadership and other functions of destination management. ....	62
Figure 6.3. Activities aimed towards host community (summed). ....	64
Figure 6.4. Advocacy and other functions of destination management.....	68
Figure 6.5. Activities aimed towards stakeholders (summed). ....	71
Figure 7.1. The Framework of Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management. ....	79

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 5.1: Experience of key informants. Interviewee indicators. ....	42
---	----

# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 BACKGROUND**

Tourism destinations are clusters of products, services, activities, and experiences along the tourism value chain (UNWTO, 2016). The success of a destination is not limited to the profits of the business side of its stakeholders, successful destination management must also enhance the social and economic wellbeing of the host community (Bornhorst, Richie, & Sheenan, 2010).

Managing a tourism destination in its entirety is considered a complex and collective issue that requires strong partnerships and leadership. Strategy and leadership, shared priorities, engagement, resourcing, and communications are critical success factors for working in partnerships (Brookes & Grint, 2010).

The literature associates an array of functions with destination management: marketing and branding; planning, monitoring, and evaluation; product development; visitor management; resource stewardship and environmental management; research; knowledge building; and lobbying (Pearce, 2015). In the context of the future of destination management it is proposed that destination management functions should not be seen only as relationships between government and the tourism industry (Dredge, 2016). Stakeholder advocacy and community leadership are offered as relevant functions to successfully manage destinations in the future (Dredge, 2016; Bornhorst *et al.*, 2010; Morrison, 2013).

The fulfilment of leadership and advocacy roles draws attention to the ambitions of the destination managers and improves understanding of the significance of the visitor industry amongst residents (Gartrell, 1994, as cited in Bornhorst *et al.*, 2010). Advocacy and lobbying are also important in regard to other aspects of management within the



region the destination is situated in: such as infrastructure and planning (Pearce, 2016b). By their nature these type of functions in the community are often presented as issues of relationships over structures (Brookes & Grint, 2010). In recognition of the importance of support from local residents and tourism sector stakeholders (Morrison, 2013), organisations responsible for managing a destination are perceived as the leaders and advocates of tourism interests for other sectors and within the local community (Dredge, 2016). These destination management organisations are expected take a wider role in society: from building tourism network hubs, being collaboration experts, digital content masters, and facilitators, to being acknowledged as experience brokers, environmental and cultural champions, and official consumer and tourism advocates (Morrison, 2013).

Pearce has offered extensive empirical analysis and research within the context of New Zealand through a conceptual framework of interdependent destination management functions (Pearce, 2016b). This framework pulls together the marketing and product development sides of destination management and proposes an overarching concept for balancing supply and demand. Facilitation, planning, advocacy, environmental management, and consultation are placed as interface management functions that create a crossover between the destination and the region it is situated in. Advocacy is presented as an interconnecting link between destination marketing, research, and planning; community relationships are not reflected on the proposed framework.

This thesis investigates how advocacy and community leadership feature in destination management, how they are interconnected to other functions of destination management, and how they contribute to creating the interface between a destination, its stakeholders, and the host community.

## **1.2 KNOWLEDGE GAP**

Different elements and functions of destination management have been researched, especially destination marketing and branding, but there is a need to further understand how they connect and how the destinations relate to the regions they are situated within.

More knowledge is needed around cases where destination management is implemented as an overarching approach (Pearce, 2016a). The role of the interface functions in

destination management, such as advocacy, is largely unexplored (Pearce, 2016b). There is a gap in the knowledge surrounding how these interface functions are implemented and interconnected in managing different types of destinations and for different sets of stakeholders. Little is known as to how advocacy and community leadership are operationalised and how they interrelate to other destination management functionalities.

### **1.3 RESEARCH AIMS**

The aim of this research is to explore ways in which advocacy and community leadership feature in destination management. The following two questions are addressed:

- 1 - To what extent are advocacy and community leadership perceived by DMOs to act as an interface between the destination as a functional unit and the region it is situated in?
- 2 - How do advocacy and community leadership interrelate with other destination management functions?

The thesis contributes to a better understanding of how advocacy and community leadership, as interface functions of destination management, are conceptualised by practitioners within different types of destinations and the regions the destinations are situated in.

### **1.4 RESEARCH CONTEXT**

There is a noticeable shift happening among national level destination management organisations in Europe. Strategic destination management and community related support are becoming vital to the development of human resources (including education and the improvement of the competences of those working in the tourism sector), whilst cooperation with appropriate stakeholders allows for the dissemination of resilient destination development ideas (Borzyszkowski, 2015).

Estonia, a country in Northern Europe, as a national level destination was chosen for exploring advocacy and community leadership in the context of this study. Estonia is implementing destination management as an overarching approach and integrated upper level concept. The visitor journey is seen as an experience consisting of interactions with

service providers, the environment, other visitors, and local communities. The National Tourism Development Plan for 2014-2020 puts additional focus and effort on interface destination management functions by prioritising key areas such as: destination planning and the empowerment of partnership efforts; the development of inter-regional products; advocacy for new business models and innovation; and the development of human resources including competencies and education (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, 2013). Implementing these strategies is seen as a cooperative and shared responsibility by numerous stakeholders within the industry. The long-term national development plan is complemented by four-year action plans specifying relevant interim targets, responsible bodies, and resources.

## **1.5 METHOD**

The study reflects on the conceptual framework of interdependent destination management functions (Pearce, 2016b). Literature that refers to both the theoretical and practical issues connected with destination management, advocacy, and community relationships was studied and reviewed in order to refine definitions and identify the role of these functions in destination management.

Qualitative research was carried out in order to explore the research questions and assess the attitudes, opinions, and behaviour of the relevant practitioners implementing destination management as an overarching concept in Estonia. The research project interviewed ten very knowledgeable key informants. This purposefully selected group represented the entire set of organisations involved in destination management at national and regional levels. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the research method to offer a more in-depth exploration of the research questions (Botherton, 2015).

## **1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

This thesis compromises seven chapters, which are as follows.

Chapter One introduces the study by unfolding the background, provides a brief introduction to the knowledge gap, and presents the aims of this research.

Chapter Two, as the first literature review chapter, is devoted to a critical overview of various streams of literature on destination management organisations, destination management, the interdependency between functions of destination management, and how destinations connect to the regions they are situated in. The chapter covers key concepts in the literature that integrate the destination and destination management with the regional settings of the destination.

The second literature review chapter, Chapter Three, builds on the previous one and is devoted to discussions around destination leadership, stakeholder advocacy, and host community attitudes within tourism destinations. The literature reviewed in chapters Two and Three is then summarised, synthesised, and integrated into the conceptual framework entitled “Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management”.

The research context of Estonia, its organisational chart of tourism, and destination management are outlined and its suitability for exploring advocacy and community leadership is considered in Chapter Four.

Chapter Five develops the research process to address the research questions. The chapter also provides details on the applied methodological tools and approaches, sampling techniques, participant selection, data analysis techniques, and position of the researcher. Ethical aspects, key matters of data trustworthiness and validity, and limitations of the study are also discussed within this chapter.

Chapter Six is devoted to findings derived from the research project that focused on implementation of advocacy and community leadership amongst national and regional level destination management practitioners in Estonia. Primary data insights provide

initial evidence into the enactment of advocacy and community leadership within destination management.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis. The chapter begins with a discussion of the outcomes of the research in the context of practice and the application of the theory of advocacy and community leadership in destination management. The tentative conceptual framework of “Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management” is revised according to the findings. The chapter concludes the study by acknowledging this study’s contribution and outlining recommendations for future research.

## **2 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This literature review addresses three main bodies of knowledge relevant to this research: relationships between tourism destinations and their settings; destination management organisations; and the functions of destination management and interrelations between them. The review brings together varied, but relevant, information to provide the basis for a conceptual framework to address the research aims and builds a foundation for the research approach. Gaps in knowledge and research are identified throughout both chapters of the literature review.

Chapter Two reviews the literature on destinations: how destinations connect to the regions they are located in as well as interdependencies between functions in destination management and of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs). The subsequent chapter focuses on literature that addresses advocacy and community leadership within destination management.

The chapter begins by looking at conceptualisations of destinations and of the related notion of region in which the destination is located. The discussion highlights the importance of collaboration and partnerships between the stakeholders within a destination. The next section addresses the roles of a DMO in managing and developing a destination. The final part of the chapter investigates frameworks that relate destinations and destination management with their respective regions. It explores the framework of interdependent destination management functions, which sees destination management as an overarching approach and creates an interface between the destination and the region it is situated in.

The literature on destinations, destination management, and territories is large and diverse, but largely identifies the isolated functionalities of destination management. Destination management literature often overlaps with that on approaches to governance (Pearce, 2016b), a concept which refers to relationships between multiple stakeholders and how they interact with one another (Baggio, Scott, & Cooper, 2010). This discussion considers both streams, as the focus of the research is on advocacy and community leadership in destination management involving stakeholders and host communities.

## **2.2 DESTINATION AND REGION**

Tourism destinations are clusters with specific business aims and non-business-related goals, or networks of suppliers meeting the visitors' needs (Laesser & Beritelli, 2013; Baggio *et al.*, 2010). The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) defines a tourism destination as following:

A physical space with or without administrative and/or analytical boundaries in which a visitor can spend an overnight. It is the cluster (co-location) of products and services, and of activities and experiences along the tourism value chain ...  
A destination incorporates various stakeholders and can network to form larger destinations.

(UNWTO, 2016, p. 13)

From a territorial setting, a tourism destination can be a single resort, a local council, a wider region, at the national level as a country, or even wider (Sainaghi, 2006). Borders of destinations are blurring, and they can be seen as poles of attractions within the boundaries of a local authority or across these territories. Suggesting that a destination is not strictly limited to the boundary of a local authority, Beritelli, Bieger, and Laesser (2014) proposed a dynamic approach to destinations by defining them as combination between region, business interests, and visitors' experience. These single destinations can network and be linked to form a larger destination.

To understand a destination as a system, Lew and Cheer (2018) describe destinations' main characteristics by listing elements such as: natural and/or created attractions; tourism related infrastructure; an active destination marketing network; the presence of a structure or organisation who is responsible for destination development, marketing, and

change management; and a host community and stakeholders who are involved in relevant processes. The set of stakeholders that incorporate a destination is unique for each destination and the interactions and influence between them are unique (Timur & Getz, 2008). The stakeholders' influence over policy, resources, and environment; historical destination development; nature of the industry; and governmental and institutional culture lead to destination specific patterns of tourism development (Timur & Getz, 2008).

The success of a tourism destination is not limited to the profits of its business stakeholders but is embedded in a destination's broader ability to enhance the social and economic wellbeing of the host community (Bornhorst, Richie, & Sheenan, 2010; Harrill, 2004). At the same time development of a destination is reliant on collaboration, partnerships, and cooperation (Zach & Fesenmeier, 2016) between stakeholders and the host community as it impacts the political, economic, cultural, social, and environmental sustainability of the region (Hall, 2011; Bornhorst *et al.*, 2010; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Harrill, 2004). Issues of coordination, collaboration, and partnership have been for some time now at the forefront of tourism research on finding solutions to resource management and destination development problems (Hall, 1999). It is pointed out that there is a lack of wider horizontal coordination in tourism, however at the same time it is recognised that individual operators will consider costs over the benefits of collaboration (Pike, 2004). The strong relationships sometimes evident between tourism industry stakeholders and government owned destination managers has raised questions, for example, around the extent to which the established policy processes are contributing to meeting narrow sectorial interests, rather than to outcomes that are in the public interest and contribute to the sustainable development of the destination (Hall, 1999). Beaumont and Dredge (2010) suggest that local tourism policy preparations have been pragmatic and opportunistic, complex and contested.

Crises and economic downturns within recent history have turned the focus of researchers onto understanding how these impact the resilience of destinations and attitudes of a host community towards tourism and visitors. Dwyer (2018) concludes that current practices of sustainability, the global expansion of tourism, and volume over value attitudes, will continue to increase the negative impacts on destinations and that a pragmatic change is



needed for resilience of destinations. He advocates for rejuvenating tourism and the mindset of destination stakeholders by proposing a paradigm shift relating to seven characteristic elements: political economy; environmental ethic; stakeholder orientation; stewardship orientation; value; place; and focused promotion. The deeper social presence of a destination positively influences the quality of life of host communities; their interaction with visitors; their knowledge transfer; and gives a coordinated voice to all stakeholders.

It can be summarised from the literature, that destination as a system and a network of service providers, is connected to the region it is situated in by stakeholders and the host community. These three sides: destination managers, stakeholders, and host community mutually influence each other. Recent research suggests that wider horizontal cooperation and involvement of the local community is becoming an important aspect to manage the resilience and sustainability of that destination. These connections in the context of managing a destination are explored in the upcoming sections of the literature review.

## **2.3 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS**

Destination development, management, and marketing within a region is usually assigned to a dedicated DMO. This can be an independent organisation or a part of a larger multifunctional one (Pearce, 2015). Their governance structures range from public authority to public-private partnership models:

A Destination Management/Marketing Organization (DMO) is the leading organizational entity which may encompass the various authorities, stakeholders and professionals and facilitates tourism sector partnerships towards a collective destination vision.

(UNWTO, 2016, p.13)

DMOs not only manage a destination, but also plan and develop it, linking planners, investors, developers, residents, local organisations, and the industry in their destinations (Timur & Getz, 2008). They also play a crucial role in fostering cooperation between destination stakeholders (Pechlaner, Volgger, & Herntrei, 2012; Timur & Getz, 2008). Bornhorst *et al.*, (2010) summarise that the aim of the DMO is to help to ensure that visitor experiences are highly satisfactory and highly memorable, while providing

effective destination management in their respective area. They also emphasise that one of the DMO aims should be working towards enhancing the well-being of destinations' residents.

The functions implemented by a DMO vary between national, regional, and local level tourism organisations (UNWTO, 2016), but they include the following, among others (Pearce, 2015; Pearce, 2016b; Pike, 2016; Volgger & Pechlaner, 2014; UNWTO, 2016):

- implementation of tourism policy;
- strategic destination planning, monitoring, and evaluation;
- market research, information management, and knowledge building;
- human resource development and training;
- destination marketing, positioning, and branding;
- provision and management of tourism information;
- product development, safety, and quality management;
- resource stewardship and environmental management;
- leadership, partnerships, advocacy, and lobbying;
- community relationships
- business support, consultation, and facilitation; and
- operations.

The national level DMO or national tourism organisation (NTO) is usually responsible for tourism policy, tourism strategy, countrywide stakeholder coordination, and destination marketing (Borzyszkowski & Marczak, 2011). Regional tourism organisations (RTOs) are responsible for destination management, strategic planning, knowledge management, and relationship building in a wider geographical area, which is often wider than the boundaries of a local authority. Local tourism organisations (LTOs) are responsible for information provision, product development, and quality management in a smaller geographical unit, a single destination, or a town.

Despite their regional settings (NTO, RTO, or LTO), DMOs are seen to go through changes. Reinhold, Laesser, and Beritelli (2018) observe that DMOs have started to dissolve their classic organisational boundaries, and projects and networks are starting to dominate over planning and daily activities. The study carried out by Pechlaner *et al.*

(2012) indicates that the extent to which a DMO can affect destination governance is strongly linked with their acceptance by the destination stakeholders. However, there is a lack of knowledge about how to increase the acceptance of destination management amongst stakeholders on a regional and national level (Dwyer & Kim, 2003) and understanding destination governance and management on a broader scale (Laws, Agrusa, Scott, & Richins, 2011).

The following section explores how destination management functions, listed previously, interrelate with each other and create an interdependency between the destination and its region.

## **2.4 INTERDEPENDENCY OF FUNCTIONS IN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT AND DESTINATIONS' INTERFACE WITH ITS REGION**

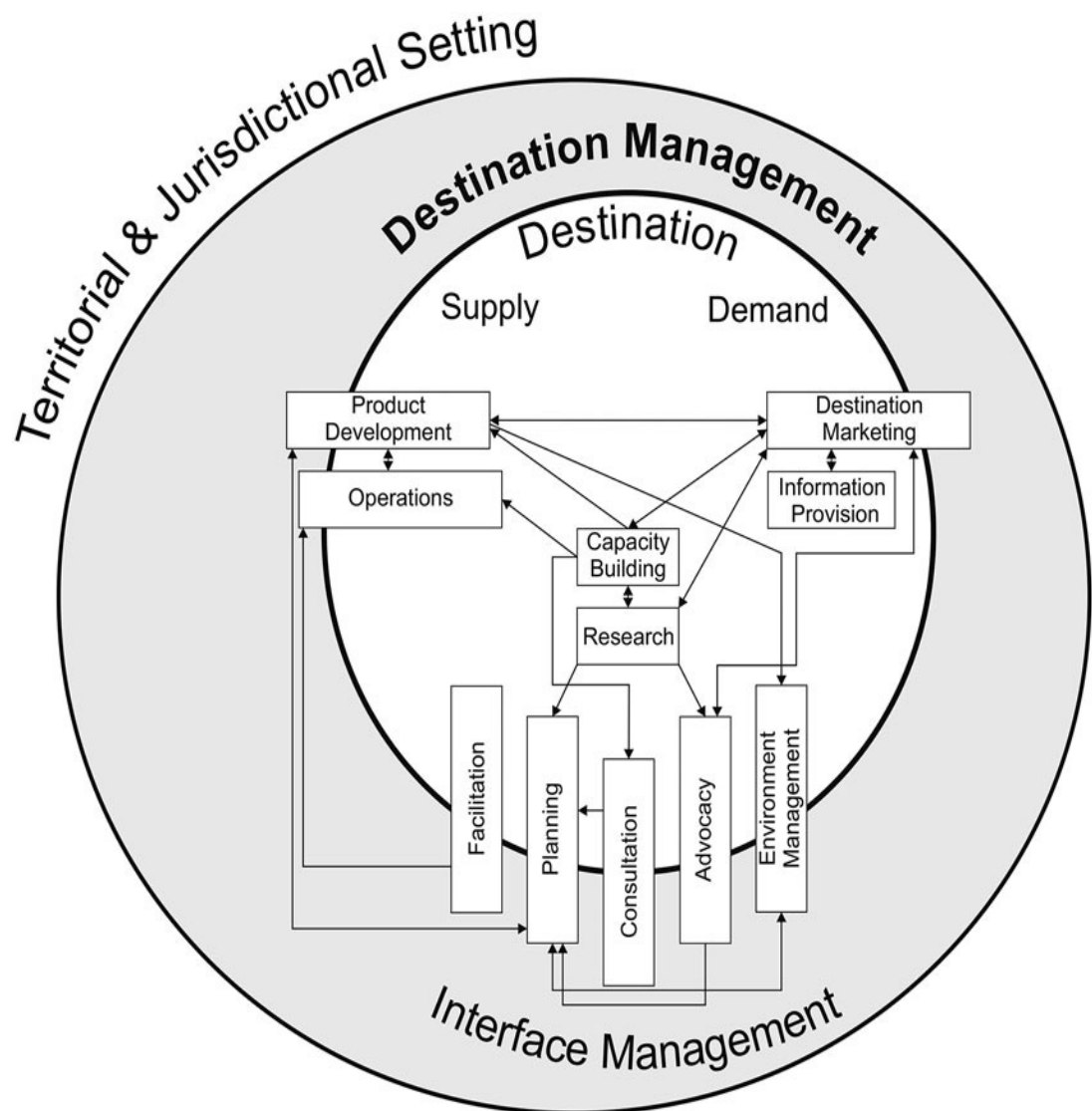
The destination is connected to the region it is situated in via destination management and by a DMO implementing its functions and managing stakeholders and the host community. In the context of the future of destination management and DMOs, it is proposed that host community relationships should be recognised, and destination management should not be seen only as relationships between government and the tourism industry (Dredge, 2016). However, there have been few attempts to develop frameworks and models that help to integrate destination, DMOs, and their regional settings. Moscardo (2011) calls this a major challenge for tourism research, observing that planning models do not take non-economic factors into account, nor often integrate with wider development processes in the region. This section explores three of the frameworks that bring together and integrate destinations and destination management with the jurisdictional and territorial settings of the destination.

Dwyer and Kim (2003) proposed, through research within the context of Australia and Korea, a framework determining the competitiveness of a destination on the national and regional level. As it was noted at the beginning of this chapter, each destination has its own unique pattern of development and set of stakeholders, Dwyer and Kim emphasise that the set of competitiveness indicators that apply to single destinations are unique. This

is one of the few studies that considers interdependencies between DMOs and destination performance. In this framework destination management is linked to the socioeconomic prosperity of a region, and the quality of life of the host community. The proposed framework does not identify indicators or determine the indicators that form the successful link between the destination and the region it's situated in. The authors also admit that socioeconomic prosperity is not well defined and the debate around the topic is still on-going.

Fernández-Tabales, Foronda-Robles, Galindo-Pérez-de-Azpillaga, and García-López (2017) proposed a System of Territorial Governance Indicators for Tourist Destinations (SITEGO), a statistical model combining quantitative and qualitative variables through 43 indicators. SITEGO looks at the roles played by the public administration, businesses, DMO, and host community by evaluating trust in government, efficiency of policy tools, and stakeholder participation in planning and destination development. While the authors claim the model to be successful, it does not offer any description of what the general success of a destination may look like or what are the interdependencies of the indicators.

Pearce (2016b) offered, through extensive empirical analysis and research within the context of New Zealand, a conceptual framework of interdependent destination management functions that explicate the relationship between destination, destination management, and the territorial setting. This framework (Figure 2.1) comprehensively integrates the marketing, information provision, and product development sides of destination management and forms an overarching concept to balance supply and demand. Capacity building and research form the centre of the framework, inter-relating with destination marketing, product development, and interface management functions. The interface management functions, which create the crossover between the destination and region in question, are facilitation, planning, advocacy, environmental management, and consultation. Advocacy, community relationships, and leadership are gaining importance as destination management functions (Dredge, 2016; Dwyer, 2018). Pearce (2016b) presents advocacy as a link between destination marketing, research, and planning, while mentioning it as being important around other functions within the region such as infrastructure. Community relationships, as a destination management function, are not reflected in the framework offered by Pearce.



The framework of interdependent destination management functions (Pearce, 2016b) presents in the most logical way the interrelations between destination management functions and the interface with the region it is situated in. This research uses the framework of interdependent destination management functions as a starting point to explore advocacy and community leadership in destination management.

## **2.5 SUMMARY**

This chapter reviewed literature on DMOs, destination management, interdependency between functions of destination management, and how destinations connect to the regions they are situated in.

Destinations and the regions they are situated in are connected through stakeholders and host communities. Management of a destination and implementation of tourism policy is usually assigned to a DMO. Destination development and management influences the quality of life of the host community, the economic and environmental sustainability of the region the destination is situated in, and attitudes towards tourism and visitors. Cooperation gives a coordinated voice to its stakeholders and impacts tourism policy. Facilitation, planning, consultation, advocacy, and environment management, as functions of destination management, create the interface between destinations and the regions they are situated in. Advocacy, community relations, and community leadership are proposed to gain wider importance in management of destinations.

Several gaps in knowledge around how destination management, DMOs, and their relationship with the regions in which they are located in were identified throughout the chapter. More knowledge is needed around cases where destination management is implemented as an overarching approach (Pearce, 2016b). We also need to know how destination management interconnects (or not) with their regional settings, and the role of stakeholders in the implementation (Pearce, 2016b). Finally, further research is needed to understand if community leadership should be part of a DMO's interface management functions and how this may inter-relate with other functions within an overarching approach to destination management.

Building upon this chapter, and with a view to shedding further light on the above gaps, the following chapter will review the literature streams in relation to advocacy and community leadership in destination management.

## **3 ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter Three discusses leadership, stakeholder advocacy, and host community attitudes within tourism destinations. It builds on the previous chapter that reviewed literature on how destinations and their management relate to the regions they are located within, and the interdependency of destination management functions.

This discussion considers literature streams on destination management and Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) connecting to community management, community leadership, advocacy, lobbying, and residents' perceptions towards "their" destination.

The first section of the chapter focuses on destination leadership, it explores the influence among stakeholders in destination management and relationships within the destination network. The next part of the chapter reviews literature on advocacy within destination management, an area that is still largely unexplored. This is followed by a section on community leadership, conceptualising this as relationships between the host community, destination managers, and government. The last section of this literature review considers applied aspects of DMOs managing host communities and stakeholders.

The final section of the chapter develops a conceptual framework integrating and summarising the discussions of the literature presented through Chapters Two and Three.

### **3.2 DESTINATION LEADERSHIP**

Chapter Two identified tourism destinations as complex, but tightly knit clusters or networks of stakeholders trying to meet visitor needs. Tourism development impacts businesses and organisations in tourism as well as local communities in the region the

destination is located in (Beritelli, Buffa, & Martini, 2016). These businesses and individuals involved in destination management mutually influence each other (Beritelli & Bieger, 2014), but have their own distinct objectives and interests that support and challenge the destination (Currie & Falconer, 2014). Coordination in tourism should not only occur between service providers, but also between local, regional, and national government (Beritelli, Buffa, & Martini, 2015). Relationships, both formal and informal, between industry and government shape tourism planning and development (Dredge, 2006a). To ensure that the destination development processes are socially compatible destination managers should gain the community's (both stakeholders and residents) trust and endorsement (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2016). Thus, strong leadership within a destination is necessary to manage these relationships and proactively shape the future developments of the respective regions (Kozak, Volgger, & Pechlaner, 2014).

Within academic research destination leadership is presented as an umbrella for collaboration, trust, stewardship, and care, and seen as a supplemental dimension for destination governance (Pechlaner, Kozak, & Volgger, 2014; Beritelli & Bieger, 2014). In the framework describing the leadership cycle Hristov and Zehrer (2015) link destination management, leadership, and governance. The authors assert that destination leadership provides scope for collective action for destination managers, helps to set up common goals and responsibilities, and allows for leverage of resources within destination management. Destination management plans and strategies are supported by strategic decisions made as part of destination governance. In turn, destination governance sets clear boundaries for destination leadership and provides formal structures to execute leadership decisions (Hristov & Zehrer, 2015). Drawing on this framework and integrating it with the interface destination management functions, as proposed by Pearce (2016b) and discussed in Chapter Two, it can be argued that planning, consultation, and facilitation are connected with destination governance while the functions of advocacy and community management are part of destination leadership.

Successful destination leadership enhances trust (Beritelli & Bieger, 2014) and helps towards building a consensus between the public and private sectors and the community in regard to plans and proposals concerning destination marketing, management, and



governance (Beritelli *et al.*, 2016). Beritelli and Laesser (2011) identify four stereotypes of stakeholders illustrating the nature of power relations within a destination:

- 1) Locals are valued as being influential through their material assets
- 2) The private sector focuses on the hierarchical positions as corporate culture-based asset.
- 3) The public sector, including DMO representatives, value and have power over knowledge and processes.
- 4) Representatives of the community concentrate on knowledge and their power lies in information and influence.

Section 2.2 noted that the stakeholders, their influence and relations, form networks unique to a specific destination. In tourism research destination management, leadership, collaboration, and interdependency of private and public sector stakeholder networks is explored and analysed via the lens of network theory (Albrecht, 2013). These networks are considered a response to the rapidly changing and interconnected world (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010). Nurturing and developing a leadership network increases the capacity to influence policy (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010). Leadership networks also reveal a dynamic view of destination planning (Dredge, 2006b). For example, depending on the current issues in the local destination network, a regional tourism organisation might remain in the policy related network but will move into the active community if a particular issue activates their concern (Dredge, 2006b). Dredge continues that a tourism destination and its networks often reach beyond the boundaries of tourism related businesses, and there are overlapping interests that include, for example, chambers of commerce, and community and environmental groups. Some research claims that destination leadership networks are still largely focusing on facilitation of information exchange and knowledge transfer and need to develop further in order to enable long-term and sustainable destination leadership (Zehrer, Raich, Siller, & Tschiederer, 2014).

Though it has been argued that destination actors need to find a common ground to exercise leadership functions (Hristov & Zehrer, 2015), government intervention is necessary for destinations to remain competitive, to manage community and stakeholders, and to support knowledge transfer (Baggio & Cooper, 2010). A DMO is often seen as the leader and advocate of tourism interests for other sectors and within the local community

(Dredge, 2016). Leadership capacities of a DMO increase its influence and power within the destination (Beritelli *et al.*, 2015) and increase support from the host community and destination stakeholders (Morrison, 2013). Dredge (2006a) claims that, there is expectation of leadership and control to avoid considerable conflict when it comes to the resourcing of tourism. Bornhorst *et al.*, (2010) add that stakeholder confidence in the DMO improves DMO's ability to attract and secure sources of funding.

It has been noted that different governance arrangements can make a DMO lead in different realms of destination management; such as product development, capacity building, and/or marketing (Valente, Dredge, & Lohmann, 2015). Pikkemaat, Peters, and Chan (2018) add that a DMO can facilitate innovation, improve product and service quality, and influence capacity building via successful destination leadership within a destination, although local tourism policy and current destination strategies need to stimulate and support this innovation.

Literature highlights that in situations when public funding becomes constrained and DMOs face difficulties pursuing destination management, leadership tends to move away from DMOs to big businesses (Pechlaner, *et al.*, 2014). Indeed, the question has been raised as to whether destination leadership needs to reside within DMOs in order to establish effective and efficient destination development (Pechlaner *et al.*, 2014). However, where leadership is delivered only by the private sector and no supportive destination governance structures are in place, Currie and Falconer (2014) argue that this may lead to duplicated efforts and questionable sustainability of the destination management.

The literature clearly shows that destination leadership forms a core function between different aspects of destination management. It is emphasised that successful management of wider network stakeholders and local community needs a well thought out and balanced leadership from the public actors or a DMO.

More recently practitioners and academics have seen destination management and tourism strategy implemented as a fluid bottom-up approach rather than a conventional top-down approach (Hristov & Zehrer, 2015; Beritelli & Bieger, 2014). There has been a visible trend of wider involvement of stakeholders and local communities into destination

planning and policies. Drawing on their member countries fostering integrated approaches to destination management, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) concludes in their analysis of key trends in tourism policy that there is a need to:

Recognise the value of strong dialogue between government, industry, and civil society in the development, implementations and monitoring phases.

(OECD, 2018, p.22)

Several case studies confirm this development to be successful. Research carried out in Cyprus by Boukas and Ziakas (2016) demonstrates that a bottom-up approach is important for re-orientation of policy and addressing the wellbeing of residents and the sustainability of the destination development. The conclusion of a similar study carried out in Sweden claims that a bottom-up approach is important in order to adjust the destination development projects to local conditions (Lindstrom & Larson, 2016). Research carried out in China confirms that destination social responsibility has significant effects on how the residents perceive the impacts of tourism, environmentally responsible behaviour, and overall satisfaction of the community (Su, Huang, & Pearce, 2018).

Destination leadership forms a distinct role of destination management and governance by connecting destination managers with the host community and wider stakeholders, while helping to set up common goals and manage interests and relations of all the interested parties. Implementation of destination leadership, focusing on wider stakeholders and local community, can be divided into two features of destination management: advocacy and community leadership. This literature review continues by exploring advocacy and community leadership in separate sections.

### **3.3 ADVOCACY**

Little is known about advocacy in destination management, which is one of the reasons for conducting this study. Some destination marketing related research considers advocacy as tourists speaking about the destinations they have experienced and visited (Gopalan & Narayan, 2010), while some see advocacy as residents speaking to visitors (Palmer, Koenig-Lewis, & Medi Jones, 2013).

However, with a focus on destination management, the limited amount of literature sees advocacy, lobbying, and representation as functions about shaping and voicing the needs and aspirations of stakeholders (Laesser & Beritelli, 2013; Hartley, 2010).

Advocacy in destination management could be seen and practiced as a field-policy network (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010) between the industry stakeholders within that destination. This type of network usually connects leaders, who share common interests or a cause and commit to influencing a field of practice or policy by seeking to shape the environment (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010). Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) argue that effective field-policy leadership networks work across the organisational boundaries and make it easier for leaders to find common ground, mobilise support, influence policy, and allocation of resources. As the DMO is a coordinating mechanism for the tourism industry and stakeholders, they are also seen as responsible for stakeholder leadership and advocacy of tourism interests in other policy sectors (Dredge, 2016; Pike & Page, 2014; Bornhorst *et al.*, 2010).

One of the few frameworks mentioning advocacy as a function in destination management is the interdependent destination management functions framework (Figure 2.1). It presents advocacy as an interface management function between destination and the region it is situated in. Advocacy in destination management links to destination marketing, research, and planning functions. Pearce (2016b) argues that advocacy is a significant feature judging on the responses of the DMOs from New Zealand in the related research on destination management. His research suggests that destination managers practice advocacy by taking a pro-active stance to make the tourism sector's voice heard, for example around infrastructure and planning, though much of it is implemented within casual situations, like "over a cup of coffee". The wider aim of advocacy is to ensure that aspects of destination management are included in the broader functions of government (Pearce, 2016b).

The empirical part of this research aims to fill the gap in knowledge by exploring how advocacy features in national level destination management, how it interrelates with other destination management functions, and how it is implemented by a DMO and its stakeholders.

### 3.4 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Community management and leadership are hailed to be the “next big thing” in order for DMOs and destination managers to remain successful and contribute to greater resilience for their destinations (Dredge, 2016; Dwyer, 2018). While recent studies deepen our understanding around the attitudes and relevance of the host community in relation to a destination, little is known about community leadership in the context of destination management or how it interrelates with other functions of destination management.

Tourism may be located relatively lowly in the hierarchy of factors that influence residents’ lifestyle decisions (Sharpley, 2014). In destination development, residents’ trust and their level of power are connected to their quality of life and determined by perceptions of impacts of tourism, and attitudes towards tourists (Nunkoo & So, 2016; Martín, de los Salmones Sánchez, & Herrero, 2018). Residents’ trust in government actors and their level of political support are complex issues that are determined by several factors (Nunkoo & Smith, 2013). The research shows that residents’ trust in government actors in tourism is influenced by the political and economic performance of those government actors (Nunkoo & Smith, 2013). Residents are generally worried about the negative impacts of tourism (Almeida Garcia, Balbuena Vázquez, & Cortés Macías, 2015). As destinations evolve and go through different lifecycle stages, so do the residents’ perceptions and support towards tourism and the destination change (Almeida-Garcia, Peláez-Fernández, Balbuena-Vázquez, & Cortéz-Macias, 2016). However, an involved host community can understand the importance of tourism and is more likely to accept the inconveniences that come with it (Almeida-García *et al.*, 2016; Huh & Vogt, 2008).

Residents’ attitudes towards tourism and involvement in destination development needs to be managed and led. Leadership within a wider community could be seen as a collective leadership network (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010). At the centre of a collective leadership network are groups of diverse people who can solve problems in an environment of uncertainty and complexity by taking actions that positively affect themselves and their community. There is no need for everyday management of this type

of self-organising network, all it needs is a facilitator who ensures that members find each other around the common goal (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010).

One of the ways to manage and lead the host community and its attachment to tourism is by considering their perceptions and attitudes during destination strategy development processes (Campon-Cerro, Folgado-Fernández, & Hernández-Mogollón, 2017). These bottom-up strategy developments should be approached as being holistic and the engagement mechanism must be well designed (Paddison & Biggins, 2017). Nunkoo and So (2016) consider that residents would be willing to participate, if they perceive that supporting the tourism industry would positively impact their quality of life. However, Dredge (2006a) warns that local government may not have an accurate overview of interests and issues facing the local community, and therefore the wider community needs to be engaged directly. Clearly defined involvement strategies, governments' level of engagement, and feedback are crucial factors in community participation. Lindstrom and Larson (2016) found that conflicts of interest and exclusion result if such participation is not successfully managed.

The following section will examine the applied aspects of destination leadership.

### **3.5 APPLIED ASPECTS OF DESTINATION LEADERSHIP**

Advocacy and leadership help destination managers to focus the attention of wider stakeholder groups and the host community on tourism, thereby improving their understanding of the destination's development. Sharing the benefits of tourism and destination development across all social spectrums and communities is one of the ways to practice destination leadership. A DMO is the entity that is tasked to draw the attention of the host community and wider stakeholder groups to tourism and to the significance of the visitor industry (Bornhorst *et al.*, 2010). Bornhorst *et al.*, (2010) observe that economic indicators such as visitor numbers, visitor spend, generated tax revenue, and tourism related employment levels are relevant for the host community and stakeholders to help them understand the success of both the destination and the DMO. DMO supplier relations, effective management, strategic planning, proper funding, and personnel are success factors relevant for tourism related stakeholder groups (Bornhorst *et al.*, 2010). Attention should not only be drawn to these success factors, but also to possible negative

sociocultural and environmental impacts of tourism in the host communities, by explaining the measures developed in order to reduce undesirable tourist behaviour in their communities (Martín *et al.*, 2018).

Broad-based education and awareness campaigns draw attention to tourism and are a possible step towards a supportive community (Andereck, Valentine, Knopf, & Vogt, 2005). Implementing such initiatives requires a comprehensive strategy involving people from different social groups and backgrounds (Nunkoo & So, 2016; Martín *et al.*, 2018). For wider involvement, destination development and management related info should be available via a variety of communications channels: local institutional websites, local media, or public talks could help to link residents and destination managers (Campon-Cerro *et al.*, 2017). The positive nature of the reporting and frequency of these communications impact on the perceptions of success by the host community and stakeholders (Bornhorst *et al.*, 2010). Bornhorst *et al.*, (2010) also suggest that DMO and tourism stakeholders can maximise the effect and leverage of each other's positive communication messages.

DMOs are encouraged also to lead and manage the host community's attempts to advocate to visitors on behalf of the destination. Residents' recommendations to visitors are driven by their personal experience rather than the branded image of the destination (Palmer *et al.*, 2013). Thus, greater awareness of local offerings and the ambitions of a destination leads to greater support of the residents towards the goals of tourism and guides their recommendations to visitors (Palmer *et al.*, 2013). Offering free or subsidised entries to local tourist attractions in the off-season or the opportunity to be involved in local tourism strategy development processes are examples given to increase and drive the residents' involvement.

### **3.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

This research is approached deductively. The existing body of knowledge and literature was taken as a starting point. Based on the integration of relevant theory and findings, a conceptual framework was developed and will be tested in the empirical research (Brotherton, 2015).

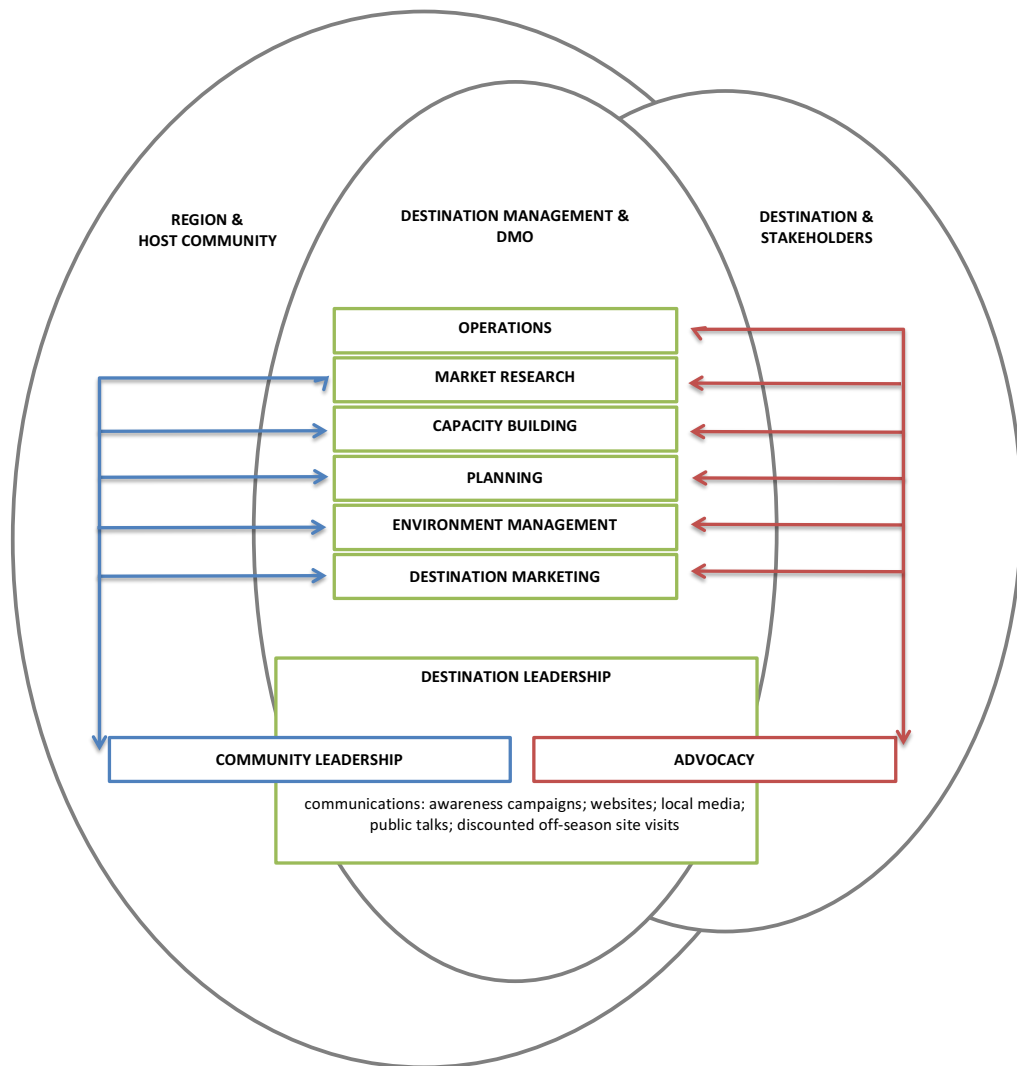
The conceptual framework of advocacy and community leadership as functions of destination management is presented in Figure 3.1, it was developed by synthesising the literature discussed in this and the previous chapter. This tentative framework attempts to depict the interdependency between advocacy and community leadership with other destination management functions. As emerged from the literature review, there is a lack of knowledge around advocacy and community leadership in destination management, and there were no prior frameworks systematically presenting those relationships.

The conceptual framework is colour coded and its elements are explained in this section. The framework shows three intertwined ellipses representing: the regional setting of the destination and host community (left-hand side); the business side of that destination and related stakeholders (right-hand side); destination management and the DMO (center). Nested within the DMO ellipse are seven functions of destination management (green); the arrows represent the interrelations between the functions of destination management. Advocacy (red) and community leadership (blue) act as functions creating the interface between the destination, stakeholders and the region it is situated in (Pearce, 2016), whereas destination leadership (Hristov & Zeher, 2015) acts as an umbrella connecting both abovementioned functions of destination management. Advocacy as a function is focused on destination stakeholders, wider business interests, and government. Community leadership as sub-function of destination leadership is focused on the host community. Communications, awareness campaigns, websites, local media, public talks, and subsidised off-season site visits are seen as activities to implement advocacy and community leadership.

While community leadership as a function is relevant to host communities' quality of life and impacts their attitude towards tourism and interactions with visitors, it also influences tourism related policies and the sustainability of the destination. Community leadership, as a destination management function, interrelates with destination planning, environment management, destination marketing, and DMO operations.

Advocacy as the voice of stakeholders leads to knowledge transfer within the destination; it influences tourism related policy, the environment, and resources for destination management. Advocacy, as a function, interrelates with environment management, planning, capacity building, research, and destination marketing.





*Figure 3.1. Conceptual Framework of Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management.*

The proposed framework of advocacy and community leadership in destination management will guide the empirical research by exploring its application in a context of a selected destination management case, Estonia. The research method and analysis process are presented in Chapter Five.

### **3.7 SUMMARY**

This chapter has discussed literature related to destination leadership, stakeholder advocacy, and host community attitudes. Successful destination leadership needs maintenance of relationships as well as effective and structured communications. Though a great amount of literature explains the relationships and interests of the stakeholders, host community, destination managers, and government, more knowledge is needed on how advocacy and community relationships feature in destination management and how they interrelate with other destination management functions.

Strong leadership is a necessity to shape future development of destinations and the regions these destinations are located in. Leadership within a community helps to increase the destination's capacity to influence policy and bring about social change, though it is dependent on aspects of government and the policy environment. In destination management the need of stakeholders' to be heard in community, government, and wider business-related groups could be voiced through advocacy and lobbying. The successful and collective voice of the stakeholders shapes tourism policy, the availability of resources, the environment, and infrastructure.

Residents' interests in destination and tourism are underpinned by tourism's influence on their quality of life. The host community is generally worried about the negative impacts of tourism, but those actively involved in tourism are more positive and understand the benefits of tourism. To foster positive attitudes, the host community must be involved directly in the development of a destination. In order to accomplish this, there must be an integration strategy in place and opportunities must be opened for regular two-way communications between destination managers and members of the community. Host communities also play a role in destination marketing through giving recommendations to visitors.

Researchers have called for DMOs and destination managers to recognise wider community management and involvement in destination and tourism development. Similarly, the OECD has also identified this as one of the latest desirable trends in tourism policy. Bottom-up approaches are recommended for re-orientating tourism related policies and destination development related strategies.

Finally, the chapter concluded by presenting a conceptual framework of advocacy and community leadership as functions of destination management. The tentative framework was prepared by integrating and summarising the relevant literature. It outlines the interdependency between destination management functions in relation to the host community and stakeholders. The applicability of the framework will be explored empirically through the methodology discussed in the following chapter.

## **4 RESEARCH CONTEXT - ESTONIA**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter Four considers Estonia as a location for this study. First Estonia and the specifics of its tourism are explored. The following section then looks at the tourism organisations and their role in destination management in Estonia. The last section of the chapter summarises the current national tourism development plan in light of an overarching approach to national level destination management.

### **4.2 ESTONIA AND TOURISM**

Estonia is located by the Baltic Sea, bordering with Russia, Latvia, and across the sea from Sweden and Finland (Figure 4.1). It is the smallest of the so-called “Baltic States” with about 1.32 million inhabitants (Statistics Estonia, 2018). The country celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> year as a republic in 2018, though it was occupied as part of the Soviet Union for a considerable portion of this period. Estonia’s major structural strengths include a well-educated and flexible labour force, a business-friendly environment, a robust financial sector, and well-advanced transition to digitalisation in the public sector (OECD, 2017). Estonia scores higher than the typical OECD (2017) country on many dimensions of subjective well-being: environmental quality; social connections, education, and skills; work and life balance; civic engagement; and governance.

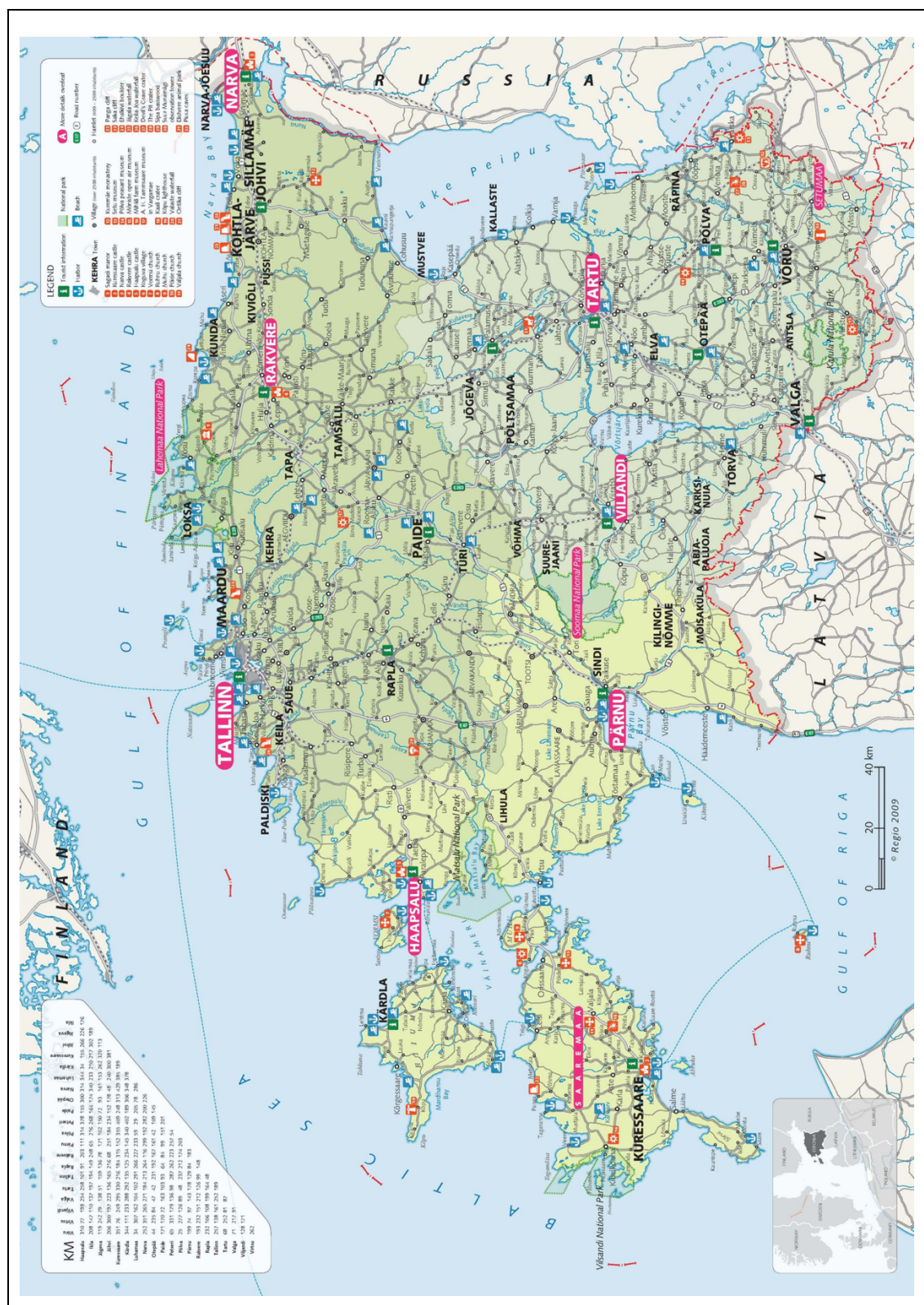


Figure 4.1. Map of Estonia ([www.visitestonia.com](http://www.visitestonia.com) 16.08.2018).

Services account for 40% of gross exports from Estonia, with maritime transport and tourism (32% of service exports) being the major contributors (OECD, 2017). Both inbound and domestic tourism have been growing steadily over recent years. The year 2017 saw a new record high for the 8th consecutive year: 3.54 million foreign and domestic tourists stayed overnight in paid accommodation establishments (up 6.6% compared to the previous year) (Enterprise Estonia, 2018d). The share of the visitor source market in depicted as overnight stays is presented in Figure 4.2. While the main source market for tourism, Finland, has been decreasing (-4% in 2017), a considerable increase was observed in arrivals from Russia and Asia. Domestic overnights account for 36.2% of all overnight stays, and these have been increasing faster compared to the increase in inbound tourism. The top foreign overnight markets are Finland 26%, Russia 7.4%, Germany 4%, and Latvia 4% (Enterprise Estonia, 2018d). Holidays are the main purpose of foreign visitors (73%), while 21% were visiting the country on business (OECD, 2018).

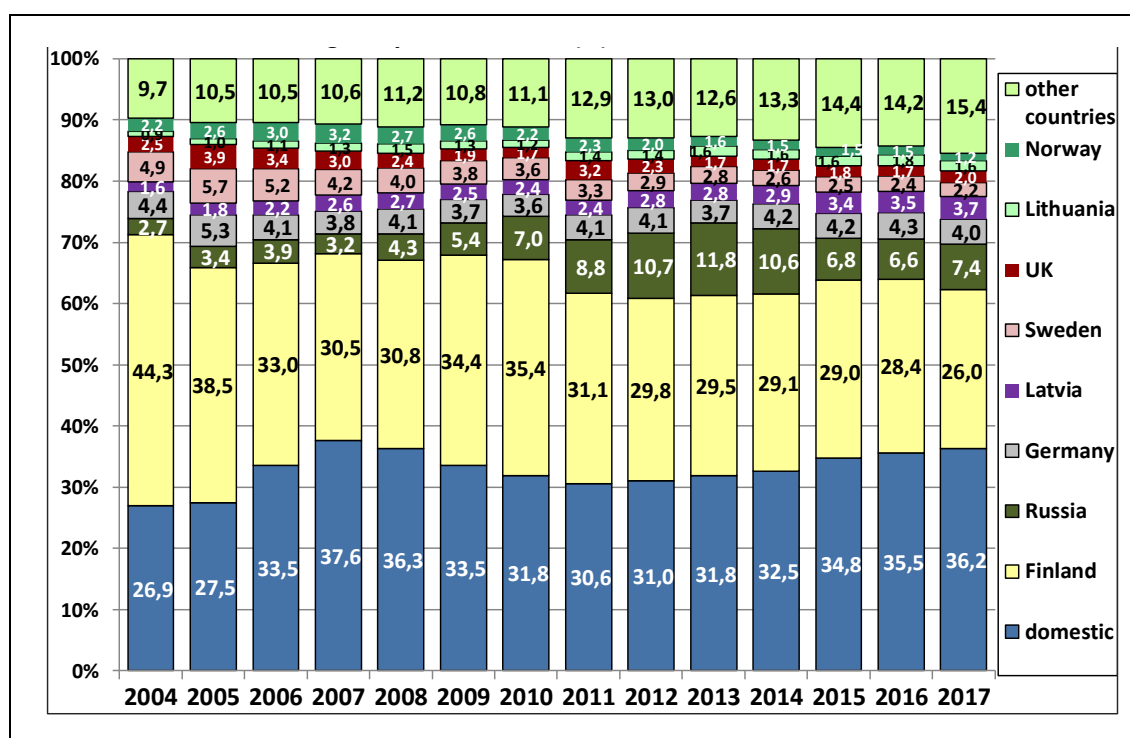


Figure 4.2 Overnights by source markets (%) in Estonia, 2017 (source Statistics Estonia via Enterprise Estonia, 2018d).

Tourism in Estonia is highly seasonal, with around 37-39% of total overnight stays occurring within the three months of summer (June, July, and August) (Enterprise Estonia, 2018a), and dominated by stays in a select few destinations/regions: the capital Tallinn (64.9% of total overnights), summer resort Pärnu (12.2%), university town Tartu (5.7%), the county of Ida-Virumaa (4%), and the islands (3.2%) (Enterprise Estonia, 2018b). North-Estonia (incl Ida-Virumaa) and South-Estonia (incl Tartu) as regions have seen growth above the countries' average in income of accommodation sales, Figure 4.3.

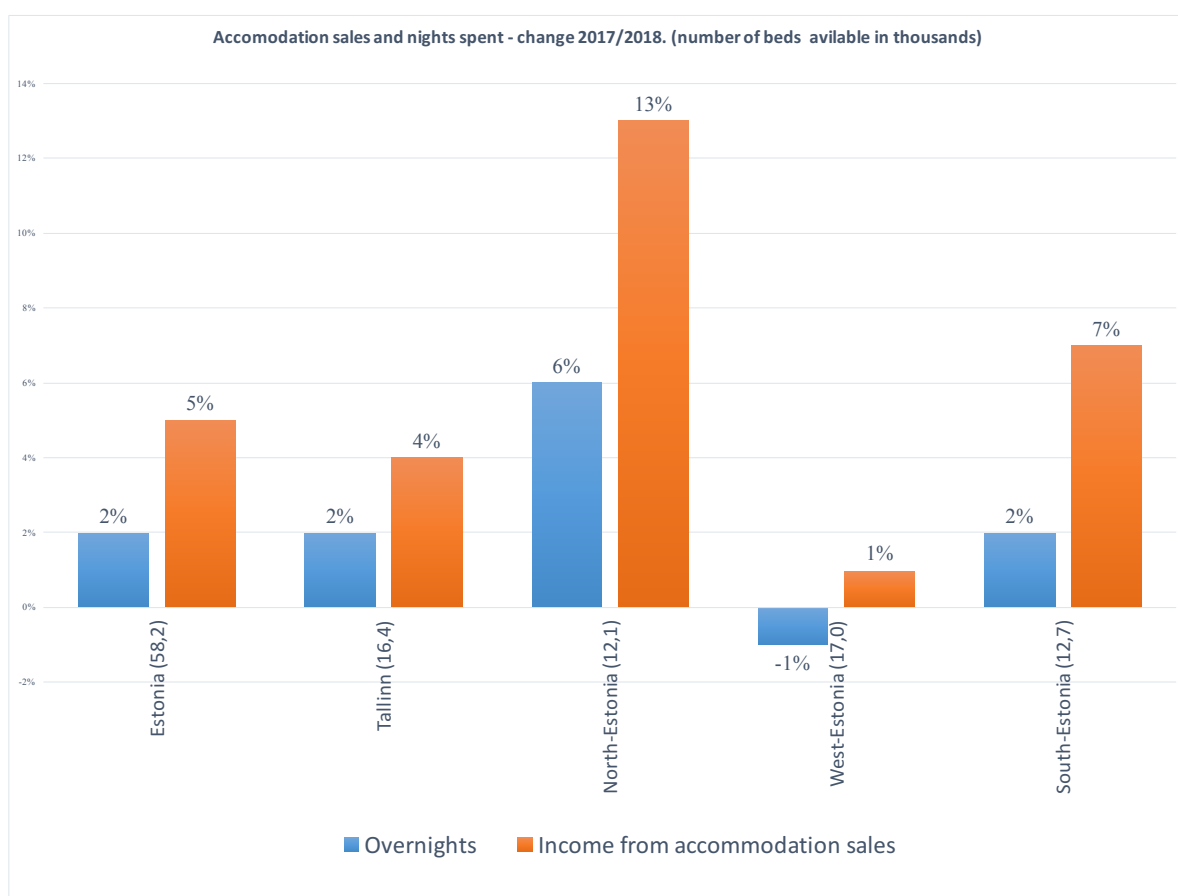
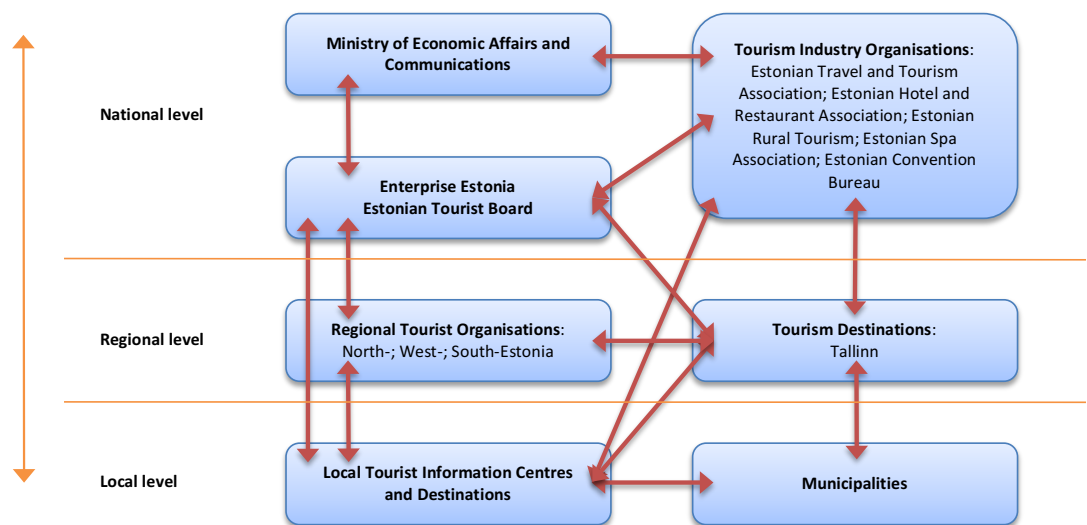


Figure 4.3 Accommodation beds, income and nights spent by regions. 2017/2018 (adapted from Enterprise Estonia, 2019).

### 4.3 TOURISM ORGANISATIONS

Organisation of destination management and tourism bodies in Estonia is presented in Figure 4.4. The Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications sets the

tourism policies, oversees the policy implementation at the national level, drafts tourism related legislation, and participates in the activities of the international tourism organisations (OECD, 2018). The Estonian Tourist Board as the national tourism organisation (NTO), operating under Enterprise Estonia, implements the national tourism policy and strategies. The Ministry in turn administers the Enterprise Estonia foundation. Tourism industry umbrella organisations (TIOs) are Estonian Travel and Tourism Association, Estonian Hotel and Restaurant Association, Estonian Rural Tourism, Estonian Spa Association, and Estonian Convention Bureau.



*Figure 4.4. Organisational chart of tourism bodies in Estonia (adapted from OECD, 2018).*

Regional tourism organisations (RTO) of north, south, and west Estonia (Figure 4.5) are involved in tourism development at the regional level. The main transport and tourism hub, the capital Tallinn, is considered the fourth regional level destination. Management of tourism information, local information centres, business and local government advisory services are outsourced to 15 county development centres as local tourism organisations (LTOs).





*Figure 4.5. Regional level tourism organisations and destinations (www.visitestonia.com 16.08.2018).*

#### **4.4 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT AND NATIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Estonia has adopted an integrated and overarching upper level approach to destination management. The visitor journey is seen as an experience consisting of interactions with service providers, the environment, other visitors, and local communities. The supply and demand sides of destination management are tightly knit. The National Tourism Development Plan for 2014-2020 (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, 2013) adds focus and efforts on destination management functions by prioritising key areas such as: destination planning and empowerment of partnership efforts; development of inter-regional products; advocacy for new business models and innovation; and development of human resources including competencies and education. Implementing these strategies and policies is seen as a hybrid approach and shared responsibility by numerous stakeholders within the industry. The long-term national development plan is complemented by four-year action plans (OECD, 2018) specifying relevant interim targets, responsible bodies, and resources. The Estonian Tourist Board as NTO gathers input and ideas from national level associations and RTOs to form action plans for destination marketing and development.

The main functions for RTOs, as per their statutes, are: coordinating destination management efforts across the counties within their region; representing and acting on behalf of the interests of destination stakeholders; product development; and destination marketing and initiation of destination related projects in the interest of the whole region (West-Estonia Tourism, 2013; North-Estonia Tourism, 2006; South-Estonia Tourism, 2014). The Estonian Tourist Board finances the RTOs (north, south, and west Estonia) and their activities in order to increase the knowledge and innovation amongst the businesses within their region. These financing contracts cover staffing and costs related to communications and seminars. While VisitTallinn, a department within the respective municipality, has close cooperation with the Estonian Tourist Board and is the main partner in destination marketing related activities, there are no financing or wider destination management related responsibilities officiated between the two.

The national level tourism industry umbrella organisations (listed in 4.2) are participating in the implementation of the National Tourism Development Plan within more specific streams and projects (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, 2016). The Estonian Convention Bureau manages marketing, cooperation, and destination networks in the fields of conference and business tourism. The Estonian Travel and Tourism Association is delegated to organise an annual tourism conference for the Estonian travel trade. Estonian Rural Tourism manages and awards the eco-tourism labelling EHE (Estonia - the natural way) for sustainable, socio, and nature conscious products.

Estonia did undergo a reform of local administration and a merger of municipalities in 2017 (OECD, 2018); this local level change will be reflected in the upcoming tourism strategies effective from 2020 and onwards.

Having a hybrid, both top-down and bottom-up, approach to implementation of tourism policy and strategy, together with an overarching approach to destination management, with supply and demand related functions tightly knit together, and importantly, destination development being seen as more than just the network of tourism stakeholders, makes Estonia a suitable case for exploring stakeholder advocacy and community leadership within destination.

## **4.5 SUMMARY**

This chapter has provided insights into Estonia as a tourism destination. It explored the current role of tourism within the economy of Estonia, the organisation of its tourism bodies, and destination management. The last section of the chapter considered the national tourism development plan in the context of an overarching approach to destination management. The chapter concluded with Estonia's suitability for researching the roles of advocacy and community leadership in destination management.

## **5 METHOD**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter Five provides an overview of the methods used to implement this study. It starts by looking at the research questions and approach. This is followed with a description of the overall research process. The chapter continues with a section that addresses the sampling strategy and describes the collection of data via semi-structured interviews carried out in Estonia. Section 5.5 provides an in-depth overview of the data analysis process. Ethical considerations of the research are then covered in the following section. The chapter finishes with a discussion of the methodological limitations of this study.

### **5.2 METHOD AND RESEARCH PROCESS**

This study addresses components of destination management, and how destinations and the regions they are situated in relate to each other. It focuses on national level destination management practices in Estonia. Specifically, it is the aim of this research to explore ways in which advocacy and community leadership feature in destination management. The following two questions are addressed:

- 1 - To what extent are advocacy and community leadership perceived by DMOs to act as an interface between the destination as a functional unit and the region it is situated in?
- 2 - How do advocacy and community leadership interrelate with other destination management functions?

Patton (2015) proposes that a study must be designed to be situationally responsive, keeping it appropriate to the specific situation and interest. Consequently, despite the ontology of the researcher and any epistemology this researcher chooses to identify suitable research methods from, these choices should be reflected in each specific

research problem and methods to gain insight into the area. Pragmatism as a research paradigm is adopted as the philosophical stance to guide this specific study. The pragmatic approach emphasises the nature of experience and has its roots in practical consequences, while focusing on the outcomes of actions and examining shared beliefs. As Patton puts it, “the pragmatic theory of truth argues that truth is verified and confirmed by testing ideas and theories in practice” (2015, p.152).

Farjoun, Ansell and Boin (2015) argue that pragmatism as an approach is suitable to address contemporary problems in organisational studies:

Pragmatism is a problem-solving philosophy that builds on a rich and behaviourally plausible model of human nature, views reality in terms of processes and relations, and highlights the interplay of meaning and action...Pragmatism is well suited to understanding the contemporary challenges of change and complexity especially as they play out across multiple levels of analysis.

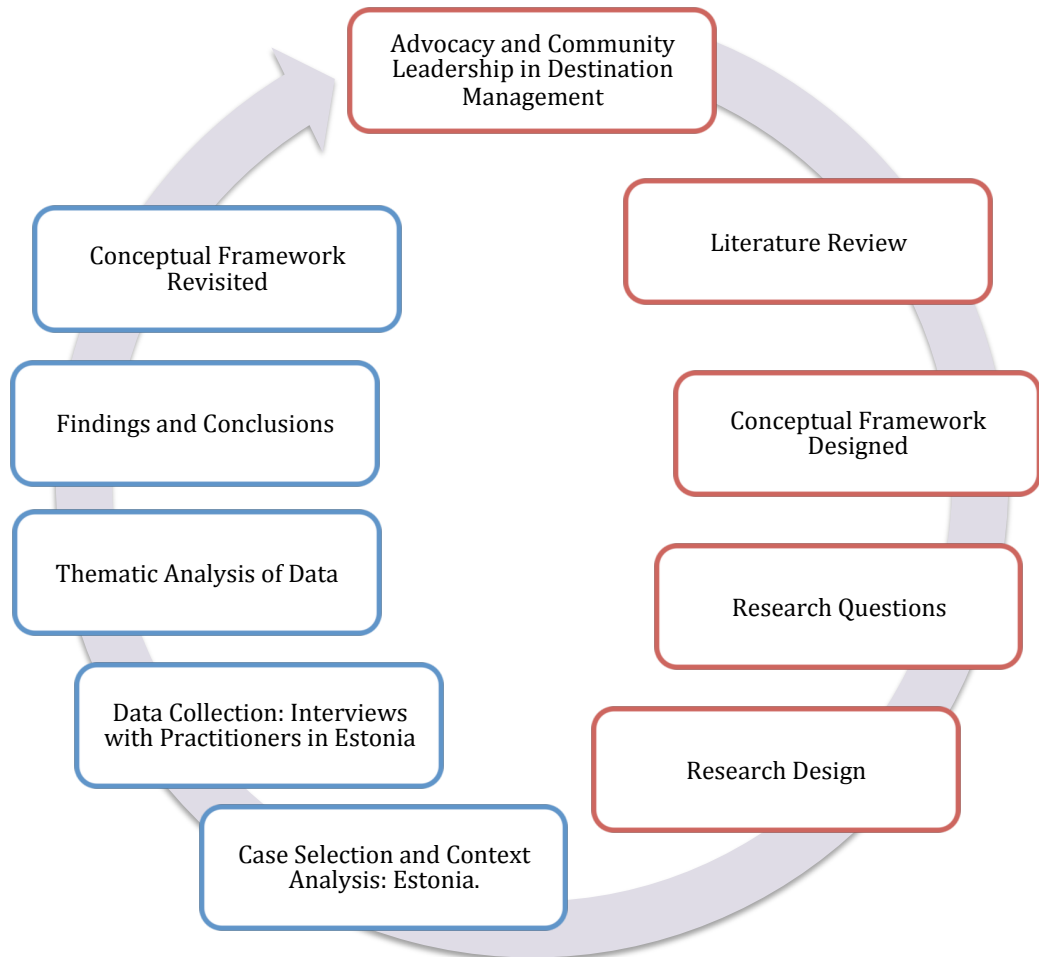
(p.1787)

Driven by the explorative nature and the applied focus of this study, it employs a mixed-methods approach. This type of approach is used by Albrecht (2010), who argues that pragmatic characteristics and multi-method case study approaches are valuable in investigating applied aspects of tourism strategy implementation.

Furthermore, applied research is contributing to knowledge that can be used to formulate problem solving programmes and interventions, whilst also illuminating societal concerns and problems (Patton, 2015). This study has a clear applied use value in answering the research questions by explaining and looking at solutions (Brotherton, 2015) as they are implemented in the real-life case of destination management practitioners in Estonia.

This research, as a process, was approached deductively: based on the literature review a conceptual framework of Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management (Figure 3.1) was developed and presented in Chapter Three. This framework guided the remainder of the research and analysis process. This is illustrated as the research and analysis process in Figure 5.1.

Mixed methods were used to collect empirical data for this study, to assess the behaviour of the destination management practitioners, and to analyse relationships between the applied aspects of the research questions and hypotheses derived from the theoretical overview (Patton, 2015).



*Figure 5.1. The research and analysis process (adapted from Brotherton, 2015, p.17).*

First, a set of tourism strategies and organisational charter documents were analysed to understand how destination management is operationalised in Estonia. This contextual data is presented in Chapter Four. Patton (2015) suggests that collaborations are structure-focused cases, where units of analysis need to be specified during the research design and lead the sampling strategy and size decisions. In the context of this research an organisational chart of tourism bodies in Estonia (Figure 4.4), implementation aspects of the National Tourism Development Plan 2014-2020, and organisation statutes of

Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) formed the structure of the case and informed the strategy for further collection of data.

Second, a series of interviews with practitioners in Estonia was carried out to assess their understanding, attitudes, and behaviours towards advocacy and community leadership within destination management. A qualitative inquiry method was followed, as the novelty of the phenomenon required in-depth exploration (Botterill & Platenkamp, 2012). The participant selection, structure of the interviews, and analysis techniques are presented in the later sections of this chapter.

The participants were requested to provide a set of follow-up data. This focused around annual frequency and activities implemented towards the host community and wider stakeholder groups by the organisations the participants are representing. This descriptive data was sought in order to not only understand applied aspects of the research topic, but also to separate the possible perceptions of the interviewees from what is happening and practiced (Patton, 2015).

At the end of the research process the empirical data and findings of the study were deductively evaluated against the proposed conceptual framework of advocacy and community leadership as functions of destination management (Figure 3.1). The updated framework is presented in Chapter Seven.

### **5.3 PARTICIPANT SELECTION**

Empirical data for the study was collected through qualitative inquiry from interviews with destination management stakeholders – managers, policy makers, and employees – from organisations that have an interest in destination management in Estonia. This included governmental, non-governmental, and private sector organisations.

The research used purposive sampling, and participants were chosen depending on their organisational tasks and relevance in implementing the National Tourism Development Plan and related action plans in Estonia. The aim of the purposeful sample was to keep the strategic focus of the inquiry on the selected case, aligned with the research questions, and relevant to the data being collected (Patton, 2015). The sample size was determined based on the usefulness and credibility of the body of participating organisations, though

the entirety of the case under study was addressed for the validity of the content (Long & Johnson, 2000). In total 11 organisations in Estonia met the criteria for the purposeful target sample:

- National level (NTO): Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications; Estonian Tourist Board of Enterprise Estonia.
- Industry Organisations (TIO): Estonian Travel and Tourism Association; Estonian Hotel and Restaurant Association; Estonian Rural Tourism; Estonian Spa Association; Estonian Convention Bureau.
- Regional level (RTO): North-Estonia Tourism; South-Estonia Tourism; West-Estonia Tourism.
- VisitTallinn (RTO) was selected based on its size and importance as a destination.

The size of the purposefully sampled group of organisations in this study represented the entire list of units of study meeting the focusing and selection criteria described above. However, South-Estonia Tourism was removed from the group, as this RTO was going through organisational change and the new body was not established at the time of the interviews.

Key informants were identified from the sample list of organisations in order to access their knowledge, experience, expertise, and insights through the interviews (Patton, 2015). Organisational websites and LinkedIn profiles were used to identify possible participants. Position within the organisation, time spent with the organisation, and previous experience were considered in this identification process. The interviewees' experience in destination management and at their current organisations is presented in Table 5.1. The newly appointed director of the Estonian Tourist Board, started late September 2018, was excluded from the possible participants list due the lack of experience in destination management, tourism, and the short time spent within the organisation (Enterprise Estonia, 2018c). The author considers the selected key informants very knowledgeable, as they have been engaged in destination management and tourism on average for 17 years and for the last nine years in the managerial and leadership positions at the organisations they are currently representing.



Interviewee indicator	Organisation type	Experience at current organisation / years	Experience in DM and tourism / years
DM1	NTO	22	23
DM2	RTO	2	23
DM3	RTO	22	22
DM4	RTO	7	21
DM5	TIO	3	20
DM6	TIO	7	20
DM7	TIO	11	17
DM8	TIO	10	16
DM9	NTO	1.5	1.5
DM10	TIO	2	2

*Table 5.1: Experience of key informants. Interviewee indicators.*

Participants were recruited through direct email or telephone contact using their official work contact details.

To collect the research data 10 semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were carried out among the identified key informants within the target sample group.

## **5.4 DATA COLLECTION – SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the data collection method for this study as these offered an in-depth exploration of the research questions (Brotherton, 2015). Themes explored during the interviews included: the role of advocacy and community leadership in destination management; how advocacy and community leadership relate to destination marketing, product development, environment management, planning, and consultation; experience of implementing destination management as an overarching concept; destination management strategies; and national/local tensions linked to destination management practices.

In the semi-structured approach to the interviews, the exact wording of the questions, and the exact sequence were not determined in advance; however, the interview topics, issues, and guideline questions were outlined in advance. The interviewer decided the sequence and exact wording of the questions, or, asked additional questions if they emerged from

the context. This type of approach increases comprehensiveness of the data, anticipates gaps in data, and helps to facilitate the organisation and analysis of the collected data (Patton, 2015). The interview guideline and sample questions are presented in Appendix 1.

The interviews applied mixed cognitive interviewing techniques: first the thought processes were explored through open-ended questions, and second, quantitative follow-up questions were asked to separate the strong perceptions of what is actually happening (Patton, 2015). The open-ended format of the questions permitted and encouraged thoughtful and in-depth responses. The interviewer followed the responses up with clarifying probes where necessary. To assess if the interviewer and interviewee understand destination management and associated definitions similarly, the interviewer asked the interviewee to explain their meaning.

The follow-up questions (Appendix 2) supporting the qualitative inquiry focused on implementation and frequency of communications related activities towards the host community and stakeholders.

The interviews were carried out face-to-face in October 2018 in Tallinn, Estonia. Eight interviews took place at locations outside the interviewee work environments, while two participants chose their office as a location. The average length of an interview was 52 minutes. The interviews were digitally recorded with the participant's written consent and then transcribed. An automatic offline speech to text software developed by the Institute of Cybernetics of Tallinn University of Technology (Alumäe, 2014) was used for transcription. The initial transcriptions were compared with the recordings to minimise possible errors. The interviewer also took observational notes during and post interviews.

## **5.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

Analysis of the transcribed interviews was data-led and inductive, this involved discovering patterns, themes, and categories in the data (Patton, 2015). A six-step approach was adapted as a guideline for the thematic analysis of the data: 1) familiarisation with data; 2) coding; 3) searching for patterns; 4) refining patterns and

consolidating to themes; 5) defining and naming themes, comparing data, and constructing typologies; and 6) writing up (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

The transcripts were initially read to regain familiarity. The analysis started with coding on the interview transcripts. The data was kept and analysed in Estonian language to keep its authenticity. After all the relevant points were synthesised from the data, the transcripts were re-read to ensure that all the important aspects of the phenomenon had been equally accounted for. The coding was re-visited two weeks after the initial coding with concerns of biases and reflexivity as explained in section 5.6.

To organise the codes to patterns, the analysis proceeded through examining each line of data and identifying actions or events within it. These patterns were then consolidated into sub-categories and themes illustrating the influence and effects of the emerged codes. At this stage the data was translated into English (Esfehani & Walters, 2018) and the themes were assigned in English. In order to enable sorting of the data at later stages an additional keyword field was assigned to each code at this stage.

The “defining and naming of patterns and themes” process was led by associated topics and questions of this research project: advocacy, community leadership, overarching approach to destination management, and destination leadership *etc.*

Data triangulation was employed by comparing interview data with the follow-up information (see above). Comparison of the interview data with the data collected with the questionnaires confirmed general alignment between participants claims within the interviews and what is actually practiced. This numeric data around annual frequency and activities implemented towards the host community and wider stakeholder groups was compared, summarised, analysed, and integrated into the findings.

The interrelations between destination management functions are presented as analyst-constructed typologies (Patton, 2015). For this purpose, relevant codes and themes were identified and grouped by different functionalities of destination management, thereafter each group was assigned a related category. Considerable care was taken, by revisiting the whole process, to ensure that the construct was empirical and data-led (Patton, 2015). All the related data was then synthesised and distilled, the significance of interrelation

and the influence between destination management functionalities, as described by the interviewees, formed the basis of this process.

During the whole analysis process, the transcriptions were re-visited in their original language, as Estonian is the researcher's native language. Interview notes, handwritten notes on printouts of the transcripts, and the sort, filter, and search functions in Microsoft Excel, were used in order to organise the codes and themes.

The writing up process was organised by themes and patterns defined during the analysis (Figure 6.1), while focusing on the richness of the data and describing participants' views, situations, experiences, and practices. Findings of the research are presented in Chapter Six through "thick" descriptions and balanced with direct quotations (Patton, 2015) to exemplify the thoughts of the people represented in the study. The quotations presented in the findings were selected in the Estonian language and translated as equivalently and accurately as possible to retain their original context and meaning.

## **5.6 REFLEXIVITY**

The author of this research is Estonian by nationality, was raised there, and lived there for 38 years. He has professional experience of over 14 years with the national level Destination Management Organisation (DMO) in Estonia, while filling several positions in destination marketing, development, and as a director. The researcher has a prior professional relationship and has been in contact with nine of the interviewees, though in some cases this experience relates to the time they were representing different organisations.

This type of familiarity with the research context gives the researcher some insider advantages like access and trust of the respondents, as they were more likely to agree to an interview with someone they knew (Wiederhold, 2015). This previous experience gives the researcher also some advantages in understanding the context and may potentially influence the information the interviewees were willing to share with the researcher. The author considers himself to be more of a "have been there, have done that" type of person, one familiar with the context (Berger, 2015), as he has not been

personally involved in any of the associated destination development or management plans and implementation in Estonia for well over five years now.

The potential effects on the findings caused by the researcher's fluid insider/outsider position (Berger, 2015) were avoided by interviewer keeping notes; where the respondents and interviewer's own thoughts were separated (Wiederhold, 2015). The interview transcripts and coding was revisited two weeks after the original analysis to identify that the authors' own experience was not interfering; analysis was then implemented as accurately as possible (Wiederhold, 2015) in order to provide the results. This revisit concluded that there was no need to amend the initial coding.

The author's own experience and perspectives, as such, are clearly indicated and separated throughout the presentation of findings and discussion.

## **5.7 ETHICAL AND PRACTICAL CONCERNS**

During this research project the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information was in compliance with The Privacy Act 1993 and the Health Information Privacy Code 1994 of New Zealand. The fieldwork of the research took place overseas in Estonia and for this reason an application was presented for consideration and approved by the University of Otago Ethics Committee (Appendix 5).

The interview participants for this research were selected based on their professional or formal roles and the interviews focused around participants' work-related tasks and views. To address the potential for problems to arise during the course of the research each participant was given an Information Sheet for Participants (Appendix 3) and signed a Consent Form (Appendix 4). To safeguard against the possibility of placing a participant in a stressful position during the interviews they were reminded at the beginning of the interview of their right to choose not to answer any questions and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. There were no such requests made by any participants during or after the interviews.

The outcomes of the interviews are presented in ways that aimed to treat the views of individual interview participants as anonymous, the respondents were de-identified and possible identifying characteristics were separated from publicly available data. Though,

due to the nature of the research, interviewees were selected from a small close-knit community of stakeholders based on their professional or formal roles in destination management, it may not be possible for participants' anonymity to be preserved when the completed research outputs are published and disseminated. Research participants were made aware of this in the Information Sheet.

The researcher did not offer the participants an option to comment on the transcripts as the interviews focused on the work-related tasks and professional roles of the participants. The participants were offered an option to request a copy of the research summary; such requests were made during the interviews.

During data analysis all original data and transcribed data were accessible only to the researcher and supervisors. Only the researcher had access to gathered personal information, for the purpose of identifying participants if it was necessary to clarify aspects of the interviews, or to provide them copies of the research summary. At the conclusion of the project the collected data was stored electronically and will be archived for five years as required by the University of Otago. All other copies of the recordings and transcriptions of the interviews were, or will be, destroyed according to the regulations and data protection practices of the University of Otago.

## **5.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

Every effort has been made to offer in-depth insight into the phenomena, exploring the research questions, and presenting the findings in a way which reflects the study as accurately as possible. Multiple strategies were employed to ensure the rigor and credibility of the research (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013; Nowell *et al.*, 2017).

Dependability was addressed by clearly defined research process and use of recognised qualitative analysis methods and thematic analysis techniques (Nowell *et al.*, 2017).

Data validity was primarily achieved by maximising the coverage of the group that was sampled during the interviews. The purposefully sampled group included one representative from every organisation involved in national and regional level destination management in Estonia (Patton, 2015).

Though only 10 interviews were carried out to collect data, saturation was reached, enabling identification of common and strong patterns and themes. During data analysis, equal attention was paid to all data items and data triangulation was used to increase the credibility (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). Reflexivity techniques were employed to reduce potential researcher biases in the process of analysis (Wiederhold, 2015). Thick descriptions and direct quotes were used while presenting the findings to address the issue of transferability (Patton, 2015).

Limitations of this study include those typically associated with qualitative research and case studies. The pragmatic approach and applied focus of the study sets boundaries to speculations and generalisations of the findings. Though the success of the applied research lies within its use value and concentration on the explanation, action, and implementation of solutions, generalisations must be kept limited to the application context (Brotherton, 2015). Modest, logical, and practical speculations can be made on the likely applicability on other situations under similar, not necessarily identical, conditions (Patton, 2015). For example, the findings of this study may be applied to other cases with similar organisational structures of their tourism industry and/or approaches to destination management. Or they can be used in cross-case studies and developing frameworks.

## **5.9 SUMMARY**

This chapter presented the study's research process, its method, its ethical aspects, and discussed limitations.

The research took a pragmatic mixed-methods approach to explore advocacy and community leadership as features of destination management, their interrelation to other functions in destination management, and their relevance in creating an interface between the destination and the region it's situated in.

Estonia was chosen as a case for this study and a location for qualitative research to be carried out. The research used purposeful sampling techniques. Based on their organisational tasks and relevance to implementing destination management at national and regional levels in Estonia, 11 organisations were listed as units to study. For data

collection purposes 10 semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were carried out amongst the representatives of the organisations in the sample list. The collected data was transcribed, thematically analysed, and reported by implementing a six-step process.

The rigour of research was addressed by employing multiple strategies. A clearly described research process, combined with established analysis methods and techniques, were used to increase dependability. Content validity of the data was led by the availability of organisations as units of study and the knowledge of the interviewees. Techniques of reflexivity were used in order to maintain researchers' biases.

Findings of the research project are presented in a descriptive way and illustrated with direct quotes in Chapter Six. The conclusions of the study are discussed and the conceptual framework of Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management is revisited in Chapter Seven.



## **6 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter Six presents the findings of the data collected while studying aspects of destination management in Estonia. The interviews were carried out in Estonia amongst national and regional level destination managers – managers, policy makers, and employees – in order to explore the research questions and to assess the understandings, attitudes, and behaviours of the relevant practitioners. The research context was previously presented in Chapter Four and the research method, together with its limitations, considered in Chapter Five. The interviews explored advocacy and community leadership as functions of destination management, their interrelation with other destination management functions, and the relationships between destination managers, stakeholders, and the host community.

The presented empirical findings are organised by themes and patterns defined during the analysis of the data. The first two sections of this chapter focus on how a destination as a functional unit is connected to the region it is situated in, and how destination management and destination leadership are understood, operationalised, and practiced. Findings on the role of community leadership and advocacy, their interrelations to other functions of destination management and applied aspects, are presented in separate sections thereafter.

## **6.2 THEMATIC MIND MAP**

The emerged themes, patterns, and associations (Davies, 2010) are visualised as a mind map in Figure 6.1. Destination management, leadership, advocacy, and community leadership form the centre of the findings. The map is colour coded: destination management and its functions are marked in blue; orange marks the subjects of the efforts of destination managers; green marks participants' views, experiences, and practices.

The findings are reported around three central themes (Burgess-Allen & Owen-Smith, 2010) through this chapter.

## **6.3 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**

### **6.3.1 THE DESTINATION AND THE REGION IT IS SITUATED IN**

The section starts by presenting findings on how participants conceptualise a destination and the region it is situated in, how the two are connected, and how destination management creates a balance between destination, local community, and stakeholders.

In general, all the interviewees identified that the destination as a functional unit and the region are connected, but a number of them admitted difficulty with the terms “region” and “territory”. However, they all considered that this connection is one of the parameters to interpret a destination, linking it to the wellbeing of the residents. Furthermore, participants stated that a destination should be managed for the benefit of the community. Though they considered Estonia, as an entire country to be a destination as such, it was mentioned that the connection between the destination as a functional unit and the local community is stronger outside the main tourism clusters:

...destination and destination management are tightly knit with the host community, especially for locations outside of the main destination of Tallinn. These communities are dependent on their visitors.

(DM7)

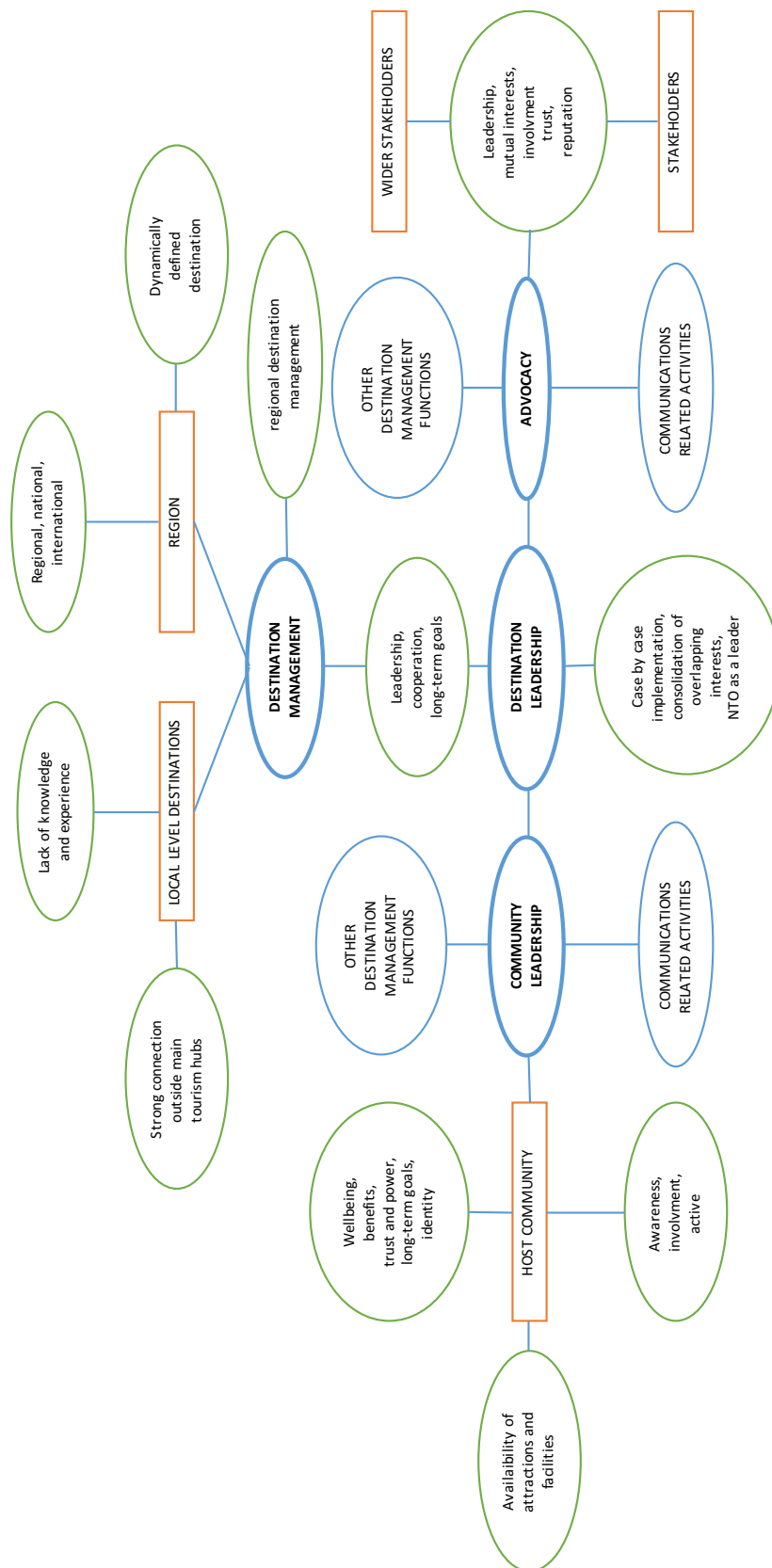


Figure 6.1: Mind map of emerged themes and patterns.

Many interviewees stated that a destination should be defined dynamically by visitor behaviour and potential, rather than the administrative boundaries of local authorities or regions, as the latter are set in the national development plan:

...destination should not be defined by the administrative boundaries within the region. It should rather be viewed as a cluster of available products, or how the traveller could potentially map out their visit to the area.

(DM4)

It was also emphasised that international and cross border regional projects create a need to communicate with the wider network of communities and tourism service providers, compared to the region your destination is usually set in.

One participant suggested that the region should be looked at as a wider area than the boundaries of the country, though admitted this approach is dependent on the availability of destinations and products meeting the specific needs of visitors:

...currently there is not a strategic view in place, that approaches a destination on a wider regional context by combining similar destinations/countries around us. Quite often Estonia as a destination has not much to offer to travellers with a wider worldview and higher incomes.

(DM5)

At the times when interview questions were leading towards community leadership and advocacy, many interviewees mentioned overtourism, by expressing that the destination has not been affected by the phenomena yet:

...here local level destinations and regions have not reached their capacity limits in any way. Tourism is not causing social problems amongst host communities, yet. This also influences the implementation of community leadership.

(DM2)

In the context of overflowing visitors, it was noted that the number of cruise passengers and the organisation required for the parking of tourist buses around main sights in Tallinn may be causing concerns for stakeholders and local communities. The respondents believed that the issue should be more carefully managed and half-day visitor flows could be somehow staggered.

Lack of interest towards working in the tourism, hospitality, and catering sectors was mentioned by all participants, in relation to local communities, as one of the main shortcomings in destination management in Estonia.

All the interviewees highlighted that in their experience community leadership and advocacy are functions creating an overarch between product development and the marketing aspects of destination management:

... community leadership and advocacy involves influencing infrastructure developments, implementing destination marketing, and lobbying for finances.

It aims for the community and politicians to understand the long term impacts of those investments.

(DM6)

These two functions also act as an interface between the destination, destination management, and the region it is situated in. Advocacy and community leadership seek to find balance between growth expectations of businesses operating in the region and the wellbeing of the host community, as emphasised by one of the respondents:

... it is important to find the balance between the growth expectations of stakeholders and not to disrupt the host community. Planning is important in destination development. The business side always wants more more more, the community often says that the current level is enough and prefers that visitor numbers are maintained.

(DM2)

The findings around destination management and leadership are concluded in the following two sections, whilst data around community leadership is presented in section 6.5 and advocacy in section 6.6

### **6.3.2 DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**

Though the organisation of destination management and destination leadership were not the main focus of the interviews, the general notions of the interviewees on those two topics are reported to provide context to the research.

The participants were critical about the organisation of tourism and destination management in Estonia, believing that the current three level organisation of destination management needed updating. It was argued that the model needs to be changed. Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) were the ones most critically looked at, with opinions varying around the extent to which those organisations are necessary and if the geographical areas they are coordinating are forming destinations. Also, the role of RTOs, their involvement in capacity building, planning, and development was criticised, as these organisations do not have direct access to entrepreneurs and service providers within their respective areas:

...the role of RTOs in destination management within Estonia is poorly defined and looks just like a reallocation of available funds. Instead local level organisations could be developed and strengthened as Destination Management Organisations (DMOs).

(DM7)

Over half of the interviewees expressed their views that availability of financial support and grants has generated several additional forms of destination management organisations as co-operational or cluster-focused projects. According to the participants, this situation has led to overlaps in responsibility and the sustainability of these coordinating bodies was questioned:

... governmental support programmes and availability of grants have resulted in too many organisations involved in destination management at the local level, currently 55, there is a need to organise and join these.

(DM1)

The chapter continues by looking on how destination management is operationalised in Estonia.

### **6.3.3 OPERATIONALISATION OF DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**

According to the participants, national level destination management in Estonia is operationalised through mutual cooperation, however, there is no official documentation surrounding those efforts:

... there are no regulations for meetings nor memorandum of understandings defining the cooperation with other associations, but the cooperation is good, and we meet at least 4-5 times a year or more often if required.

(DM10)

One of the interviewees highlighted the nature and the aims of the cooperation:

... cooperation with other DMOs is aimed at formulating the big picture and identifying mutual interests in destination management efforts. This avoids parallel and overlapping activities in those topics.

(DM6)

The implementation schedule for years 2018-2020 of the National Tourism Development Plan (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, 2018) and implementation report for 2017 (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, 2017) restate the cooperation and financing arrangements as they were described in section 4.4. Representatives of North-Estonia Tourism, West-Estonia Tourism, and the Estonian Convention Bureau confirm that they have annual government grants, managed through Enterprise Estonia, for financing certain marketing, capacity building, and operations related activities. (Due to their confidential nature, the documents relating to these grants were not available for the researcher to examine.) The representative of the Estonian Travel and Tourism Association admits that there is no financing contracts between them and the National Tourism Organisation (NTO) for organising the annual tourism conference in Estonia and the project is a cooperation between them.

The implementation report for 2017 (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, 2017) indicates that the strategy and implementation schedule, to support the development of business models and innovation for tourism businesses, was prepared. The same document also reveals that a new online self-evaluation portal for service quality assessment for destinations, attractions, and businesses was launched. The implementation plan for 2018-2020 (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, 2018) sets targets in launching the above-mentioned innovation programme and other quality management related programmes. The document also indicates that there is an increase targeted amongst businesses affiliated to the quality management, networking, and sustainability programmes offered. None of those documents set additional targets in

stakeholder management and host community leadership. The representative of the NTO noted during the interviews “not everything has been happening as quick as was planned”.

All the participants believed the NTO to be one of their main stakeholders and destination management leaders:

... we don't expect NTO to provide only grants and financial support. We expect also cooperation and them to initialise discussions leading to integration of efforts.

(DM8)

The chapter continues with findings around destination leadership and related issues, before focusing on advocacy and community leadership.

## **6.4 DESTINATION LEADERSHIP**

In general, respondents associated destination leadership with a sense of a mission to successfully implement advocacy and community leadership. All interviewed Tourism Industry Organisations (TIOs) representatives consider themselves to be leaders and advocates amongst wider stakeholders:

... our organisation defines itself as a stakeholder leader and as an advocate for different interests' groups: combining the problematic questions while managing the big picture.

(DM6)

Another interviewee described their leadership considerations in more detail:

... we are seen as leader for our stakeholders: they contact us in order to discuss their ideas and concerns. They see that we take action and advocate for activities that support their business environment and the whole destination. We have proved ourselves as stakeholder and segment leaders also for politicians, they often invite us for discussions.

(DM5)

Issues of destination leadership emerged in various ways. “Leadership skills come down to an individuals' personality” was stated several times. One of the respondents noted that leadership skills in general are missing in the local business culture in Estonia. There were others who identified the national level DMO as an organisation where destination



leadership should sit, while criticising it for not involving stakeholders in strategic discussions. Similarly, they were critical that the implementation of the current national tourism development plan has not turned out as expected, as this plan called for strong leadership. Also, they were concerned about the distancing of destination marketing from product development and destination planning, that has led to some gaps in know-how within the team of the national level DMO. Recently there was a change of the director at the Enterprise Estonia – Estonian Tourist Board, the new person filled the position just weeks before interviews (Enterprise Estonia, 2018c), many interviewees expressed their hopes for improvement in the destination leadership:

... the new director of the NTO is expected to carry out the leadership roles. But in order to accomplish these changes in destination management the NTO itself needs to plan and implement new strategies: increasing the added value of the tourism sector, employ new technologies, get experienced people on board, and innovate.

(DM1)

Findings specific to community leadership and advocacy as part of destination leadership are presented in separate sections of this chapter. The following three subsections focus on community leadership, while advocacy is presented in sections thereafter.

## **6.5 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP IN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**

In Estonia, nationwide surveys to understand the host community perception and attitudes towards tourism have not been carried out yet. The city of Tallinn is measuring the host community perceptions through regular surveys and “58% of local residents are happy with the number of visitors” (DM3), something that was also noted during the interviews.

The destination managers who were interviewed, were aware of the impacts that tourism has had on the host communities. General wellbeing and additional opportunities were mentioned as benefits for the host community. Expansion of restaurants and cafes; numerous global scale attractions and events; infrastructure developments; keeping the shops and facilities open: were some of the examples provided to illustrate how host communities benefit from destination development. These statements also stressed that

most of those investments and developments would have not happened if there were no visitors to Estonia.

When asked about the host community and its relationship to destination management, the respondents expressed views that indicated that local communities are aware and understand the importance of the tourism in their region. However, other respondents held the opinion that communities are not aware of benefits for the community and this should be improved by thorough communications:

... local communities don't understand tourism as a phenomenon and its multiplication effects as such. Media communication towards the host community should be more frequent and focus on explaining the width of the economic impact of the visitor industry.

(DM10)

One participant had an opinion that there exist differences between regions and local level destinations within the country, some communities understand the importance of tourism and have a more welcoming attitude towards the development of their destination than other communities. The 2017 reform of local administration and the merger of municipalities has been influencing destination management. The interviewees reflected on this by observing that many of the new people responsible for regional development at the local authorities were not aware, and do not necessarily understand, the basics of tourism:

... as a result of the structural reform of municipalities, there are several new people responsible for destination management and development at local authorities. Often they don't have prior experience in the respective field. We have been organising talks around the basics of tourism and destination management.

(DM2)

The participants feel that this has had a negative impact on the host community attitude towards tourism, while presenting new challenges for destination managers.

For a destination to succeed it was critical for the host community to keep its identity and believe in destination developments. These developments must have ambitions and goals that are understandable and relatable to the community. It was emphasised that remote

communities often get a “positive kick” out of tourism related developments. The interviewees noted that it is necessary that local enthusiasts and specialists must be heard around destination development and management. The contact with the community must be carefully managed, especially if new developments are started or created, or milestones accomplished. The participants’ responses revealed that the longevity and durability of the destination development and management reduces scepticism among the community:

... at the beginning the local community was sceptical around the new destination development we started. It was perceived to be another one-off project. Over the years the idea has proven to be successful and even most doubtful sceptics have joined the destination network we created.

(DM8)

Leadership was one of the main keywords mentioned in the context of involving local host communities. Leading and managing a community needs trust and belief from the community:

... a positive community attitude is highly dependable on leadership. Tourism might not be understood by the host community if there are no positive and engaging leaders visible in the destination management and development.

(DM7)

It was noted that communities need a neutral leader, this person does not always have to come from within that community. According to the experience of the participants, this outside leader helps to keep local differences at bay. It can be concluded from the interviews that if the community trusts and believes in the destination development, they are able to manage themselves as a collective leadership network. This is illustrated by the words of one of the respondents who had had long-term experience in leading communities in destination development:

... based on my experience it can be claimed that the local community doesn’t always need a participative leader. If good cooperation is established between the public, not-for profit, and private sectors, a destination lives without a strong leader present. It needs a dedicated facilitator and a coordinator though.

(DM8)

There were those participants who said that DMOs have cooperated and joined their efforts, for the last three years, to increase the awareness on destination management and the tourism industry amongst the host community. However, the interviews reveal that currently there is no long-term strategy in place to manage the community regarding tourism and destination management. The main reason limiting the need for such a strategy is that communities are satisfied with tourism and current destination developments. Most respondents manage their communities on a case by case basis according to the nature of the destination development projects. There were those who mentioned that the current allocation of funding and human resources does not support long-term approaches to community leadership. It was said that there will be new opportunities for local communities to have their say with the update of the local development plan, as “the plan will implement new community management strategies and offer additional opportunities for the local community to be involved” (DM3).

Communication is the key activity to inform, manage, and lead the host community. The aim of those communications is to increase the awareness of wider audiences, politicians, and decision makers around destination management and the role of tourism in the economy. There are several topics that interviewees highlight as being covered through their communications: regular updates on the success of the destination; why the destination needs tourists and visitors; why the destination developments are needed; why the destination needs big spenders as visitors. Communications focused on new development projects, products, and service providers are not only aimed at the host community, but also have positive influence on domestic tourism and are considered to serve as marketing communications for this segment.

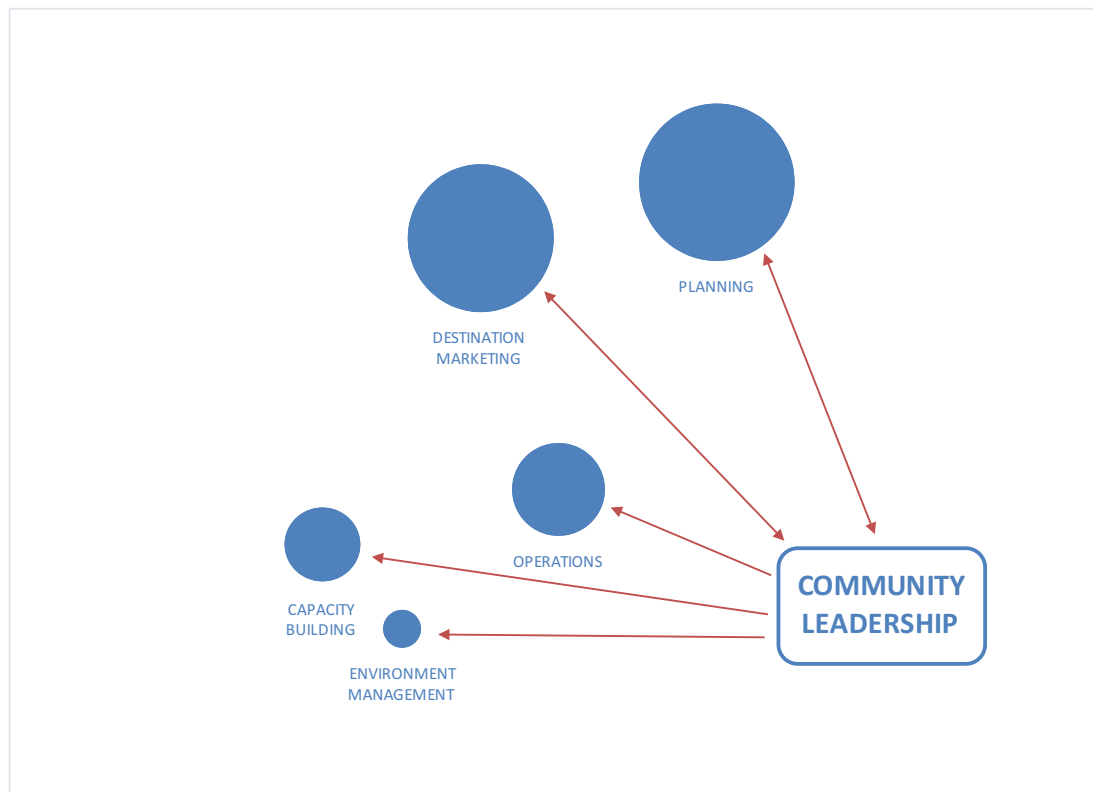
#### **6.5.1 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP INTERRELATING TO OTHER DESTINATION MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS**

Community leadership interrelates with destination marketing, planning, capacity building, environment management, finances, and operations. Its influence over other destination management activities is believed to change according to the host community attitude towards tourism and visitors:

... changes in the host community attitude towards tourists would influence the planned destination management activities. We would focus more on destination planning and development in our activities. Marketing activities would focus only on promoting the off-season and we would aim for seasonal dispersal of visitors.

(DM3)

Figure 6.2 presents a diagrammatic representation of the findings and highlights connections between community and other functions of destination management. The host community and its leadership influences DMO activities and functionalities, such as planning, capacity building, and operations including funding. Whereas destination marketing and planning interrelate with host community leadership in both ways.



*Figure 6.2. Community leadership and other functions of destination management.*

What emerged during the interviews, was that the community and its leadership have the strongest influence over planning and destination marketing. The participants note that

destination developments and plans need to be accepted by the host community. As one respondent highlights:

... the host community can be outspoken and very active, especially if they have not been consulted during the planning of major developments. The aquarium development project was cancelled; many public infrastructure projects have also gone through a change due opposition from local communities. One cannot compel communities into accepting things.

(DM1)

An engaged and positive host community can show its support and help to allocate funds for infrastructure projects. Whereas objection, or negative attitudes, from the host community can cause developments and events to be cancelled. The latter can also happen in the case where the community considers the nature of the developments are not suitable for, or not in line with, the identity of the community. The respondents emphasised that destination, attractions, and infrastructure developments must be planned to meet the needs of locals as well as visitors, as these developments serve both parties.

Community leadership and destination marketing influence each other mainly via brand values and possible recommendations. The interviewees suggested that both local businesses and members of the host community can be seen as an additional affordable source for providing recommendations to visitors. The findings highlight that, not only must the destination brand align with the values of the host community, but the host community must be informed about the ambitions of the destination marketers in order to provide these recommendations. The participants identify communications-related activities like campaigns, TV and radio shows, websites and social media in order to increase the awareness and engagement of the host community into destination marketing related activities. Changes in the host community attitude towards visitors can have an influence on the destination marketing activities. In case the community feels pressure from destination and tourism, destination marketing would focus on promoting shoulder and off-season products or showcase lesser visited destinations.

The interviews highlighted that community attitude and knowledge around the aims of the destination influences the operations and funding of the destination management. The lack of knowledge within the host community around long-term goals of the destination

management is believed to be one of the main reasons for underfunding of the RTOs and Local Tourism Organisations (LTOs). One respondent emphasised that changes in community attitude towards visitors could redirect some of the budget availability from DMO to other relevant authorities for planning, infrastructure development, and environment management.

Community leadership interrelating with capacity building was not considered to be significant by the participants and was mentioned only in the context of potentially involving younger generations in the tourism and service industries. The interviews did not suggest any direct relationship between market research and community leadership within destination management.

### 6.5.2 APPLIED ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Public awareness campaigns, seminars, educational programmes, articles by opinion leaders, and general news releases were mentioned during the interviews as the main means for how communications with the host community are applied. Numeric information provided by interviewees about the types of activities they implement annually, supports the information gathered during interviews.

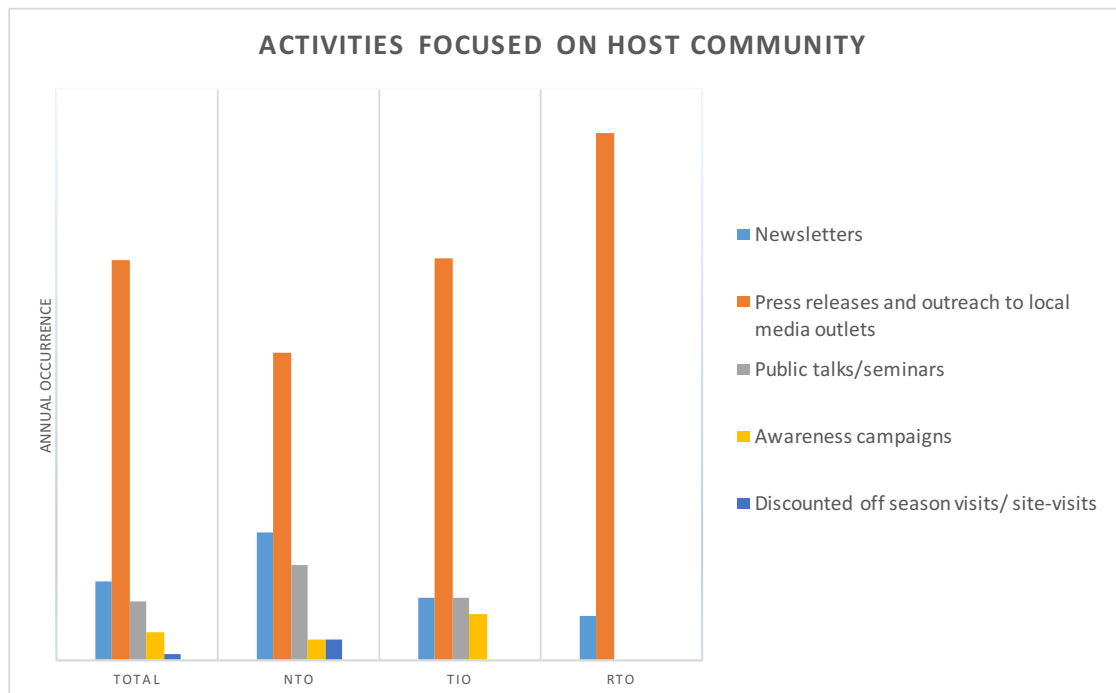


Figure 6.3. Activities aimed towards host community (summed).

This data is presented in Figure 6.3 by the type of activities for the whole destination and as implemented by different destination managers. Press relations and outreach to local media are leading activities in the application of community leadership. This is followed by newsletters, public talks, and awareness campaigns. The latter two, however, are implemented only by the NTO and TIO as the national level destination managers. Discounted off-season visits are used as a communications tool only by the NTO. Whereas at the RTO level communications with the host community is limited to press releases and newsletters.

The participants believe that communications produced by DMOs do not often get published, as there is not enough sensationalism in them for the “click driven” media. In this instance DMO owned channels like websites, social-media, and newsletters are often used to publish the message.

The respondents also considered the source of communications in community leadership to be important, stating that its necessary that these are held by DMO:

... it is important that destination managers communicate with the local community, explaining all the influences and benefits to the community, rather than asking private developers to do so.

(DM4)

Respondents noted that there have been cases where private businesses have presented destination development projects to the public by themselves, without properly explaining the wider benefits of these developments to the community. The interviewees mentioned three major destination development projects that have been cancelled as they did not get the community support needed.

During the interviews one success case was provided as an example of the strategic involvement of the host community by event managers. In this case the organiser of a major event offers to members of the local community reduced price tickets for visiting the festival on a certain day. The representative of a DMO expressed the view that this has reduced the negative mind-set of the community towards the event and its visitors:

... Saaremaa Opera Days is a great example of leadership and strategic approach of community involvement. It is a busy major event taking place in a small



community, quickly sold out tickets, often too expensive for locals to afford ... these special priced tickets present an opportunity to the local community to be part of the festivities and enjoy the event. This type of involvement has reduced the negative mindset and mentality from the host community towards this event.

(DM2)

## **6.6 ADVOCACY IN DESTINATION MANAGEMENT**

The interviews reveal that cooperation between the public, private, and non-profit sectors is important for managing stakeholders while managing a destination. The respondents consider the cooperation to be efficient amongst themselves. The aim of such cooperation is to form “the big picture” and to identify overlaps in interests. One interviewee gave an example of international feedback on the topic:

... after his visit, the UNWTO Secretary General noted it to be unique in national destination management, that in Estonia organisations consider the cooperation amongst themselves and with the state to be very good, and everyone is advocating for the same interests concerning the destination.

(DM9)

The respondents noted that a focus on the longer term, and the goals and issues under discussion, the stronger the cooperation amongst destination managers in Estonia. Destination management members support one another if a major topic comes up that needs to be advocated for; for example, changes in Value Added Tax levels on accommodation services or possible developments of a multifunctional conference venue were mentioned. In this instance, a quick decision is made if the approach to action would need lobbying, explaining, or calls for additional partners to be involved.

... we focus a lot on marketing related activities. Our advocacy and policy related topics are mainly raised in cooperation with other relevant associations.

(DM7)

The interviewees highlighted that on some occasions and in certain topics it is easier for advocacy to be undertaken by representatives of TIO rather than by those of NTO. Especially in cases where the topic might be considered politically sensitive or for some reasons governmentally owned DMOs need to remain neutral around that topic:

... NTO, owned by the ministry, cannot often be involved in certain politically sensitive topics – like VAT related issues – the membership-based organisations can raise those questions amongst wider audiences and stakeholders.

(DM5)

Entrepreneurs involved in tourism services associations, or national, regional, and local coordination units, are considered to be stakeholders by all the respondents. TIOs do not limit their stakeholders only to their members but consider their stakeholder groups to be much wider. Wider interest groups, where stakeholders need to be heard, are: other industry organisations; professional bodies; national, local, and regional authorities; ministries; parliament; and authorities within the European Union. Stakeholder management is considered to be easier to implement in smaller destinations as people know each other and it would be easier to reach out to necessary interest groups or authorities:

... cooperation with other stakeholders is great, maybe because of the open and tightly knit small society. You know most of the key decision makers and they are all within a reach of a phone call. This includes colleagues and managers within the tourism sector but reaches as far as ministers.

(DM10)

The interviewees believe that stakeholders in their respective fields need an advocate, whereas leadership, trust, and mutual interests are named as main pillars for implementing advocacy. For successful management and leadership, it is considered important that all the stakeholders are treated equally. Stakeholder leadership and advocacy is underpinned by the reputation of the organisation trying to implement it.

Motivating, inviting stakeholders together, and involving and asking their opinion helps to align the activity plans and expectations for destination management and leadership. In order to increase stakeholder involvement and manage advocacy needs combined approaches are practiced, whereas a bottom-up approach is considered to be more appropriate while preparing annual activity plans and strategies:

... most of our activities are proposed by stakeholders and members. We encourage our members to reflect on their needs and expectations towards our

activities. Our annual activity plan focuses on solving the destination related issues raised by them.

(DM5)

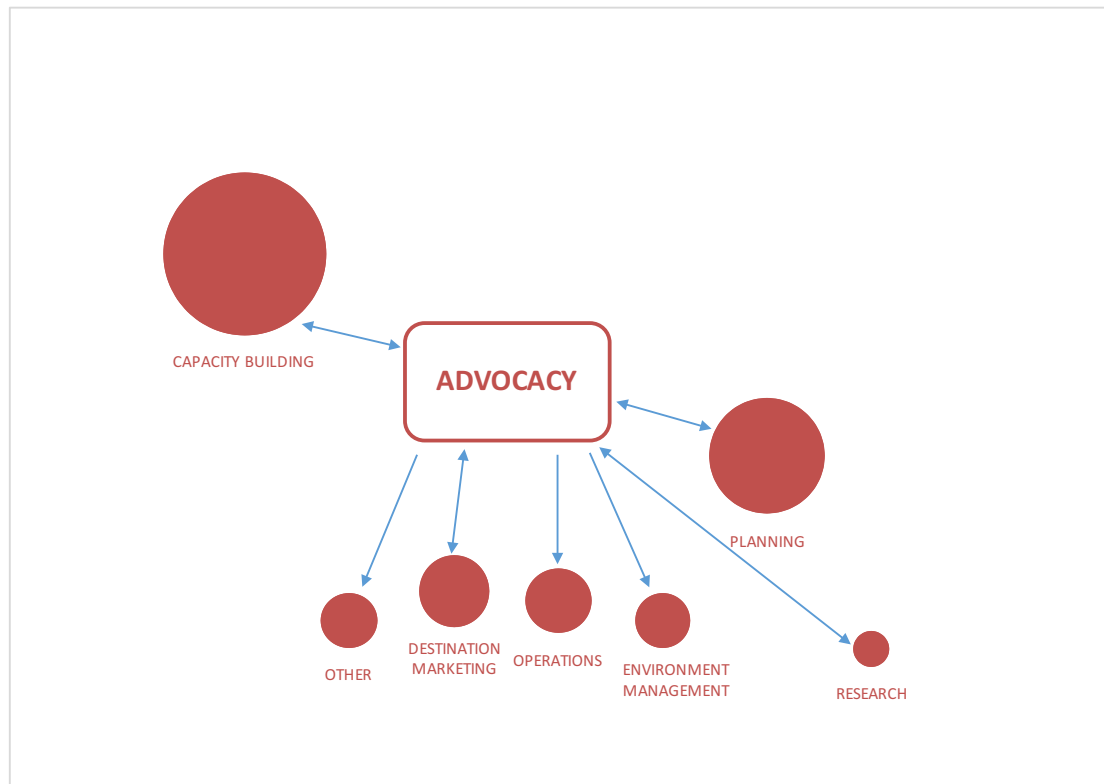
### 6.6.1 ADVOCACY INTERRELATING WITH OTHER DESTINATION MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS

The findings show that advocacy interrelates with all the identified destination management functions. Its influence over capacity-building, planning, operations, and destination marketing were commonly described by the interview participants:

... stakeholder leadership shapes the destination; it's products and services and helps to combine these for destination marketing.

(DM6)

A pictorial representation of the key findings is presented in Figure 6.4. Advocacy and other functions of destination management. This figure highlights how advocacy interrelates to other functions of destination management.



*Figure 6.4. Advocacy and other functions of destination management.*

Capacity building and advocacy mutually interrelate with each other. Seminars, conferences, meetings, and consultations with the aim of stakeholder leadership help to shape capacity and knowledge building amongst the stakeholder groups. Whereas the respondents note, that involved stakeholders have advanced understanding of destination development. The latter leads to improved and unique product offerings. On the other hand, if the expectations and concerns of the stakeholders around capacity are understood by the destination management players, they can cooperate and advocate to those involved in legislation and policy developments taking place within the destination and wider in Europe:

... the further one looks, the closer the relationship between destination managers and stakeholders becomes ... our joined advocacy efforts have turned around ideas on the politicians' desks here and in European Union.

(DM10)

Advocacy has a strong link with the planning function within destination management and to wider related developments. DMOs participating at the interviews collect feedback and information on necessary improvements or “bottlenecks” from their stakeholders, consolidate this information, and adjust their planning functions accordingly:

... we as an association collect feedback and concerns around bottlenecks in the destination from our members and advocate these to relevant authorities, who usually respond to these concerns one by one.

(DM10)

If it needs action from other authorities or players within the respective region this information is passed on to these organisations by DMOs. The respondents highlighted the following examples: getting ready for the tourist season, parking management including tour buses, and the availability of public toilets etc. It was also mentioned that the DMOs are developing new channels for more prompt collection of feedback from the stakeholders; currently emails, seminars, and consultation focused meetings are the main approaches in practice.

Destination marketing and market research are interrelating with advocacy around understanding the stakeholders and their products, while reflecting on the knowledge around potential tourists and their expectations. This knowledge transfer on the other hand generates innovation in the services, as reflected by interviewees. Local and regional level DMOs are seen hereby as the ones taking a leading role in managing and moving this information between sales networks and service providers:

... the regional level reflects the research data and knowledge from the national level down to the local levels. The regional level also collects and systemises information around local level destination developments and presents it to the national level for their destination marketing and product development purposes.  
(DM2)

Respondents did not highlight strong links to environment management and operations. Funding was mentioned a couple of times in the context of stakeholder leadership and explained by one participant as: awareness of the tourism sector amongst wider stakeholders and politicians' influencing financing and support of a DMO.

#### **6.6.2 APPLIED ASPECTS OF ADVOCACY**

Communications, newsletters, e-mails, meetings, conferences, and seminars are considered the main activities to implement advocacy and gather feedback from the stakeholders. Many of the interviewees stress that finding a balance between online and face-to-face contact is very important to manage stakeholders and understand their needs. Study tours, field trips, and golf tournaments are some of the more relaxed activities implemented, whereas advancing contact and knowledge around destination and development are the underlying focus of these events. The information provided by the interviewees about their annual practices around stakeholder management and advocacy (Figure 6.5) expands upon the information gathered during the interviews.

Press releases and seminars are the leading activities for implementing stakeholder leadership and advocacy. These are followed closely by newsletters issued to their stakeholders and wider stakeholders by all the respondents on a monthly basis. NTOs and TIOs also organise awareness campaigns with the aim to introduce destination and destination management related activities to wider stakeholder groups. The activity

portfolio of TIOs includes a range of site-visits and familiarisation trips for their members to different parts of the destination. Those site-visits are organised by the RTOs as part of the discounted site-visits.

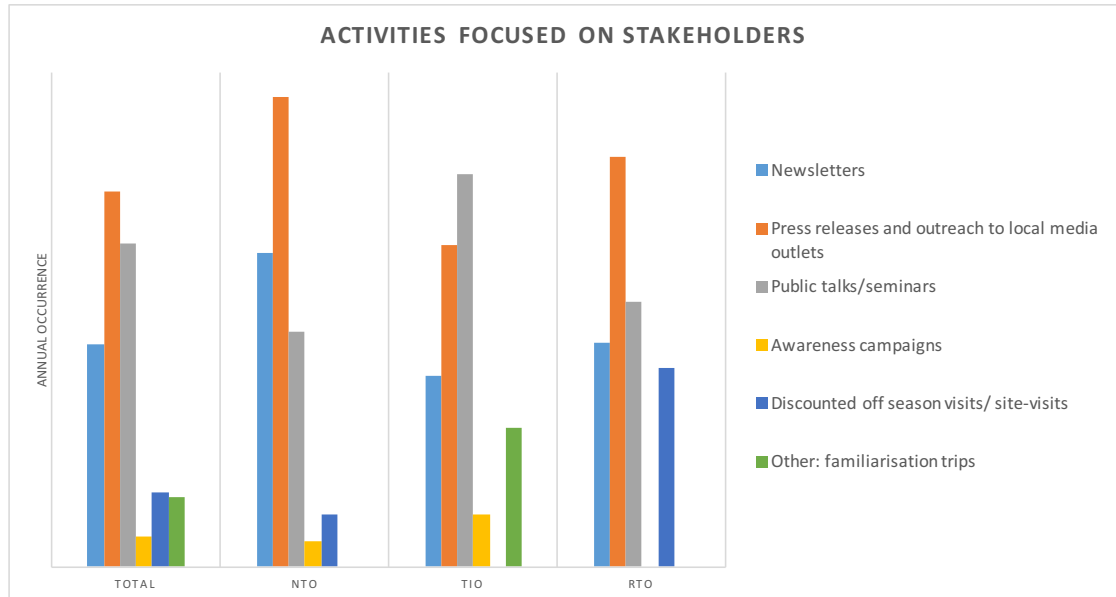


Figure 6.5. Activities aimed towards stakeholders (summed).

There are some respondents who believed that stakeholders have not had significant influence over their activities. This influence is dependent on how well-argued the ideas are, and the input that stakeholders have:

... I cannot confirm that stakeholders are having any major influence over our activities at this stage. Maybe I would prefer it to happen, to have argued ideas that we need to focus more to those types of activities or less of those.

(DM3)

One respondent emphasised the importance of stakeholders' abilities to argue and define their ideas and input:

... quite often stakeholders don't know what they need or want. Sometimes they tag along with us, admit half the way through the project - it was not what they expected. But at the same time, they struggle to describe why it was not, nor define their expectations.

(DM1)

It can be concluded from the interviews that lack of knowledge around the specific and wider benefits of the visitor industry amongst representatives of local authorities' influences stakeholder management and attitudes. Relationships with local entrepreneurs is managed by LTOs; regional and national level tourism organisations often do not reach to these players. This leads to lack of awareness of local stakeholder needs within the upper levels of the destination management model. This has given participants the impression that NTOs and RTOs are distancing themselves from their stakeholders. The participants believed that availability of sufficient finances inhibits the capacity to advance cooperation and networking possibilities among destination management players. There are those interviewees who admit that they have not provided enough feedback, nor presented their ideas, to other destination managers in Estonia. The availability of sufficient budgets and income also keeps destination management related innovations in the comfort zone; as was highlighted by one of the participants.

## **6.7 SUMMARY**

The findings emphasise that advocacy and community leadership, as functions of destination management, act as an interface between the destination, destination management, and the region it is situated in. Problems with the organisational structure of destination management and destination leadership also emerged from the data.

The interviewed destination managers in Estonia are aware of the impacts a destination development has on the host communities. They highlight that tourism has a wider impact on the host community, that it not only generates job opportunities and supports general wellbeing of the community, but also keeps facilities such as attractions and service-related businesses open. They advocated for the importance of the local community to keep its identity, claiming that, destination development, planning, and marketing efforts must be relatable and understandable to the community. It was considered important, that community leadership is managed by a DMO. Various communications related activities are applied in order to practice community leadership. The findings show that press relations, outreach to local media, and newsletters are the prevailing activities implemented amongst the destination management practitioners in Estonia. Community

leadership, as a function of destination management, influences capacity building, environment management, funding, and operations of a DMO, as noted by participants.

According to the findings, advocacy, as a destination management function, bridges stakeholder management and cooperation with wider stakeholders, such as members of the public, non-profit, and private sectors. The findings show that successful advocacy and leadership is dependent on the reputation of the organisation implementing it. A variety of communications type of activities are implemented in order to practice advocacy. Similar to community leadership the prevailing activities applied are press relations and newsletters. Seminars, familiarisation trips, and discounted site visits are believed to be important when it comes to the management of the stakeholders. The findings show that advocacy, as a destination management function, interrelates with capacity building, market research, destination planning, and destination marketing, by influencing each of them both ways. Community leadership has similar ties with functions as planning and marketing.

The following chapter further discusses the findings, in relation to existing relevant research in the field, and reports on the study's objectives. Furthermore, it re-visits the framework of advocacy and community leadership as functions of destination management and considers further research, before concluding the study.



## **7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

This, the last chapter of the thesis, begins by discussing the key findings presented in Chapter Six in the context of the literature reviewed through Chapters Two and Three. Thereafter, in the next section, the conceptual framework of advocacy and community leadership as functions of destination management is revised and amended according to the collected data: including key themes, patterns, and findings. Section 7.5 of this chapter concludes the study in view of the research aim and questions. The chapter finishes by considering implications of the study and suggests avenues for further research.

### **7.2 DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study is to explore ways as to how advocacy and community leadership feature in destination management, and then map how these functions relate with other destination management functions.

The findings suggest that destination management in Estonia, in general, is practiced as a central, overarching approach. This is in contrast to the findings of research carried out in New Zealand by Pearce (2016b), which concludes that destination management in New Zealand is not practiced as an upper-level inter-functional competence.

The findings of this study are in line with studies that confirm that there is an expectation from destination managers and stakeholders for destination leadership to reside within the National Tourism Organisation (NTO) (Dredge, 2016; Morrison, 2013). In contrast, the findings of this project do not support the arguments of Pechlaner *et al.* (2014) that destination leadership does not need to reside within Destination Management Organisations (DMO) for efficient destination development. In situations, where

leadership does not reside within NTO, it may likely be shared among other destination managers. The findings did not highlight that shared leadership has led to duplicated efforts and questionable sustainability of destination management in Estonia, as was concluded by Currie and Falconer (2014) based on their research in Scotland. Rather, the findings reveal that organisations involved in destination management are capable of successfully coordinating their leadership efforts around the matters that influence the future of the destination.

The findings of the research emphasise that the destination leaders in Estonia focus on wider and long-term issues of destination management, more so than primarily on knowledge transfer and facilitation of information, as concluded by Zehrer *et al.* (2014). Advocacy and community leadership are main features in the implementation of destination leadership, as was suggested by the literature reviewed and argued in section 3.2. In practice, these functions distinctly interrelate with other destination management functions and efforts, as destination marketing, planning, and capacity building.

From the interviews carried out in Estonia it emerged that advocacy is a function of destination management that focuses on shaping and voicing the needs and aspirations of the stakeholders of the destination.; Whilst community leadership is a function of destination management that focuses on managing the needs, concerns, and aspirations of the host community of the destination.

The findings from this study support Pearce's (2016b) framework of interdependent destination management functions, highlighting that advocacy and community leadership act as interface functions between the destination managers and the region the destination is situated in. The relationship between the destination and region is different in each case. Beritelli *et al.* (2014) proposed that a destination should be defined as a dynamic region that follows the behaviour of the visitors, rather than strict administrative borders of the regions and territories. The respondents amongst the destination managers in Estonia did not have a single view on this topic, though advocated for defining destinations in dynamic ways. However, it can be argued that this more flexible approach to defining a destination within a country or as a wider region needs a strategic approach and some sort of agreement or structure behind it.

Interviews with practitioners in Estonia reveal that the interdependency between advocacy and other destination management functions is much wider than suggested by Pearce (2016b). The findings highlight that advocacy has the strongest interrelations with destination marketing, capacity building, and planning functions within destination management. Community leadership as a function of destination management relates to destination marketing and planning by influencing each other. Other destination management functions, such as market research, operations, and environmental management, do not mutually influence the studied functions. Rather, advocacy and community leadership influence these functions within destination management. For example, the findings of the study suggest that the outcomes of destination related market research are exploited in implementation of community leadership, at the same time the decision on what and where to research by the DMO is not led by the interests of the host community or its leadership.

Environmental management did not emerge during the interviews as a significant function related to either advocacy or community leadership. This could be related to the specifics of a destination, in terms of its environmental resources, needs, and issues. For example, in the conceptual framework of interdependent destination management functions, Pearce (2016b) presents this as an important function creating an interface between a destination and its regional setting. The framework presented by Pearce is based on research carried out in New Zealand, a more natural resources-based destination than Estonia.

The applied aspects of advocacy and community leadership confirm that a variety of communications related activities are carried out to implement these functions (Campon-Cerro *et al.*, 2017) and to draw attention to destination developments (Bornhorst *et al.*, 2010). In general, a constructive cooperation exists between DMOs of Estonia. When implementing advocacy and community leadership related activities, mutual interests are identified and agreed upon in order to maximise the effect and leverage of the activities. The above findings support similar suggestions made by Bornhorst *et al.*, (2010) based on the research carried out amongst Canadian DMOs. Press-releases and outreach to the media are the main activities utilised to inform the host community and wider stakeholder groups, as was presented in section 3.5. According to the findings of this study, there are

slight differences on the type of activities (with a focus on advocacy or community leadership) implemented by destination management organisations. At the same time, the findings emphasise that more creative approaches may be needed for relevant communications to be delivered through appropriate contemporary media channels.

Furthermore, the findings of the research confirm that advocacy can be administered as a field-policy network (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010), whilst community leadership as a collective leadership network (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010). The findings highlight that community management needs a public, or third sector, body for successful implementation (Dredge, 2016; Morrison, 2013), as private businesses may fail in explaining the destination developments to the host community or in getting their support. Community attitudes towards visitors and destination development have a strong influence over the approach and practices of community leadership. This research suggests that signs of overtourism, and the local community becoming dissatisfied with the numbers of visitors, increases the need for long term and systemic strategies for community leadership. According to the feedback from one of the respondents, community leadership has become an important topic in updating their strategy and new mechanisms are being developed in order to involve the local community directly. Similarly, Paddison and Biggins (2017) emphasise the importance of well-designed engagement mechanisms for host communities in the bottom-up approaches to destination strategy developments.

On the other hand, the findings suggest that the success of advocacy and its interrelation with other destination management functions is dependent on the ability of stakeholders to reason and define their needs and expectations. Though there is cooperation between DMOs and stakeholders in Estonia on current issues concerning destination management, the interviews highlight the expectation for a clearly defined discussion concerning future destination developments, management, and strategies. It may be argued, that it could also impact how advocacy influences other destination management functions, like capacity building, planning, and destination marketing.

Organisation of destination management and tourism bodies in Estonia (Figure 4.4) was out of the scope of this study, though during the interviews it emerged on several occasions, specifically the role of Regional Tourism Organisations (RTO) and the

multitude of project-led DMOs established regionally and locally. If re-alignment and adjustment of the roles and expectations between the destination management players occurred, then, it may be assumed, that it could also influence how stakeholder leadership and host community management as functions of destination management are practiced. Change could focus on a possibility to improve the direct access for RTOs to the local stakeholders and host communities, and increase DMO involvement in capacity building, planning, and destination development.

### **7.3 FRAMEWORK REVISITED**

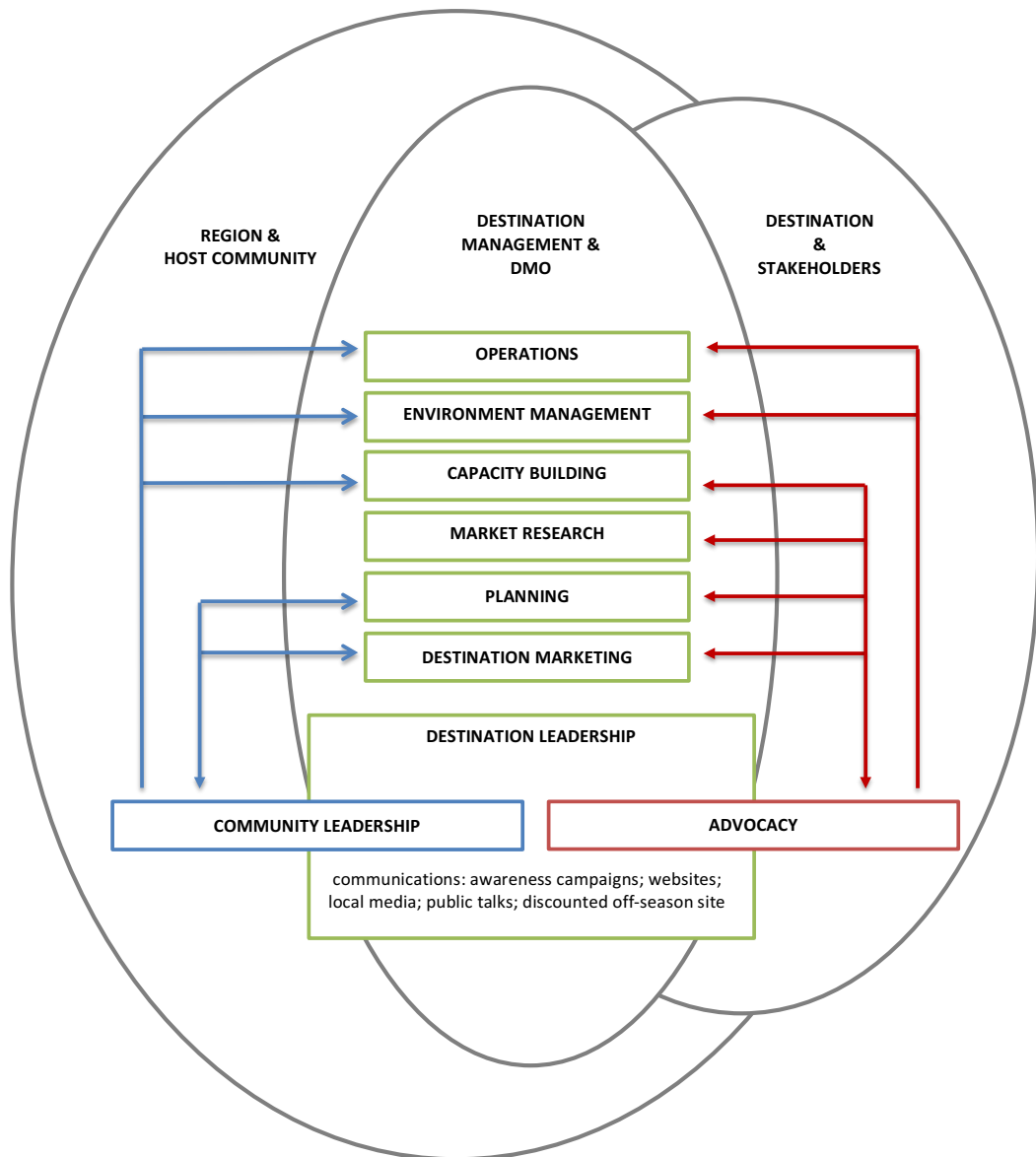
A conceptual framework (Figure 3.1) was developed based on the findings of the literature review. This tentative framework is now revised according to the findings of the research. The updated framework is presented in Figure 7.1.

Based on the findings of the research the following amendments were made to the framework: operations and environment management, as functions, do not perpetrate the implementation of advocacy, advocacy influences them; market research and community leadership do not interrelate; community leadership influences operations, environmental management, and capacity building, whereas the latter functions of destination management do not influence community leadership.

Advocacy (marked in red) and community leadership (marked in blue) act as functions creating the interface between the destination and region it's situated in (Pearce, 2016b), whereas destination leadership (Hristov & Zeher, 2015) remains in the centre of the overarching approach to destination management (marked in green) connecting both functions.

Community leadership interrelates with destination marketing and planning functions, both mutually influencing each other. According to the findings of the research, the last two are the most distinct features that are influenced by the host community. Host community support for destination development and plans helps in the allocation of funds for these investments. The findings revealed that these developments and plans must be in favour of preserving the identity of the community. The same applies to destination marketing; the community must be able to identify themselves with the destination brand

in order to become good ambassadors of the destination. The attitude of the host community towards the numbers of visitors to the region directs the focus of the destination marketing, especially the seasons, products, and locations promoted by the DMO. Community leadership influences capacity building, environmental management, and operations.



*Figure 7.1. The Framework of Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management.*

Advocacy and stakeholder leadership interact with destination marketing, planning, research, and capacity building functions in both ways. The findings of the research highlight that the link between advocacy, capacity building, and planning is the most distinct. The DMO collects feedback from their stakeholders in order to have information from operators and business partners around bottlenecks and shortcomings within their respective destination. This information is then used in the planning stages in order to overcome concerns and limitations. The findings here emphasise that advocacy and capacity building are mainly related by knowledge transfer and innovation towards stakeholders and their businesses. Furthermore, the connection provides the DMOs an input for destination strategy development and lists topics needing to be advocated, or lobbied, for to wider stakeholder groups. Advocacy, as a function, impacts environmental management, operations, and funding of the DMO. On the revised framework funding of destination management is included in the operations function.

A wide variety of mainly communications-led activities are carried out to implement either advocacy or community leadership by national and regional level DMOs in Estonia. Newsletters, press-releases, and public relations are leading applications for community leadership, while for advocacy it is more varied and seminars, site visits, and familiarisation trips are added to the mix.

The updated “Framework of Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management” may outline more explicitly the interrelations between these and other destination management functions. It presents how these functions create the interface between the destination, wider stakeholders, and the region the destination is situated in.

## **7.4 IMPLICATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

This study contributes to the body of knowledge by providing insight into how practitioners conceptualise and think about advocacy and community leadership in the context of an overarching approach to destination management. Limitations of this study were considered and rigor addressed in section 5.8. Generalisations must be kept limited to the context of application, whereas modest, logical, and practical speculations may be made on those findings.

The revisited and revised “Framework of Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management” (Figure 7.1) may serve as an initial template to address the relationship between a destination and the host community, and to the network of stakeholders surrounding the management of this destination. This framework may also depict more accurately how advocacy and community leadership interrelate with other functions of destination management. The findings may also serve as an input to cross-case studies or while exploring other destinations with similar organisational structures.

The findings of the study and the proposed framework may be useful for the destination management practitioners to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how advocacy and community leadership are operationalised in national and regional level destination management. Further they may outline how interconnected these functions are in the overarching approach to destination management.

More exploration around the phenomenon is needed, as this is one of the first studies exploring advocacy and community leadership as functions of destination management. Future research may include different sets and levels of destination managers: regional or local. According to the respondents from Estonia, negative pressure from the host community would call for long-term strategies and change the ways as to how DMOs practice community leadership and advocacy. Future research might focus on exploring to what extent overtourism and concerned host community influence the implementation of community leadership. Furthermore, representatives of the host community and their views could be included to understand the expectation for changes in implementation of community leaderships in destination management.

The organisation of tourism in Estonia, especially the role of RTOs and destination leadership issues, that emerged as a theme during this study, need to be explored further. This could be as a follow-up project comparing destination leadership related issues and destination governance procedures between different countries and destination managers, thereby helping to address the lack of cross-national comparative studies in destination governance.



## 7.5 CONCLUSION

Destination management and related practices are undergoing changes (Reinhold *et al.*, 2018; Pechlaner *et al.*, 2012). Advocacy and community leadership are seen to be gaining importance as functions of destination management (Dredge, 2016; Dwyer, 2018), though little is known about these as functions of destination management. Several gaps exist in the knowledge around approaches to national and regional level destination management (Laws *et al.*, 2011; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Pearce, 2016b), and advocacy and community leadership and their interdependency between other destination management functions.

This thesis reflects on the comprehensive conceptual framework of interdependent destination management functions (Pearce, 2016b) and contributes to a better understanding of how advocacy and community leadership as functions feature in destination management. A purposefully sampled group of key stakeholders, who are implementing destination management as an overarching approach at the national and regional level in Estonia, were studied in order to provide an empirically based picture of the phenomenon and to address the following questions:

1. To what extent are advocacy and community leadership perceived by DMOs to act as an interface between the destination as a functional unit and the region it is situated in?
2. How do advocacy and community leadership interrelate with other destination management functions?

The research findings confirmed that advocacy and community leadership act as an interface between the destination as a functional unit and the region it is situated in. These functions, part of destination leadership, help the destination managers maintain their relationship with the host community and wider stakeholder groups.

Destination managers in Estonia are aware of the impacts a destination development has on the host communities. Tourism has a wider impact on the host community, not only by generating job opportunities and supporting the general wellbeing of the community (Bornhorst *et al.*, 2010), but it also keeps facilities, like attractions and service-related businesses, open. For the local community it is important to keep its identity (Dwyer,

2018), therefore the development, planning, and marketing efforts must be relatable to, and understandable by, the community. The longevity and durability of the development increases the support of the host community towards the destination, as does the involvement of local enthusiasts and leaders to the discussions (Dredge, 2006a). The research findings emphasise the importance of community leadership being managed by a neutral DMO. Often the new developments presented and discussed by a neutral leader give the project the support it needs from the community. In Estonia there are currently no long-term strategies in place for community leadership. Changes in the host community attitude towards visitors and signs of overtourism would call for such a strategy. Most likely, it would also refocus the destination marketing and planning efforts of a DMO, as indicated by the interview participants.

Different host community settings are subject to variations in community leadership from the perspective of destination management. The findings highlighted that at the national level community leadership focuses on the economic wellbeing of the host community, by emphasising the impact of the tourism industry, related policies, and aims at getting younger people to be interested in choosing to work in the tourism related service sector. Specific destination developments and host community expectations need leadership and management at the local level, as these influence community belonging and identity.

Advocacy as a destination management function bridges stakeholder management and cooperation with wider stakeholders, such as members of the public and private sectors (Dredge, 2006b; Laesser & Beritelli, 2013). On occasion, this type of destination leadership reaches beyond the boundaries of the region the destination sits in. For example, interest groups and authorities within the European Union are the subjects of advocacy and lobby in the case of Estonia. The findings of the research reveal that successful advocacy and leadership is dependent on the reputation of the organisation implementing it. When it comes to advocating for their own sector the destination managers of Estonia consider having effective cooperation between themselves. Though there are topics that need to be advocated for by Tourism Industry Organisations (TIOs), rather than the representatives of the publicly owned NTOs, if the nature of those topics is considered somewhat politically sensitive. The respondents highlight that a bottom-up type approach is important while preparing activity plans and destination related

strategies, however, the latter comments raise the question of whether this is actually practiced.

The findings of this research confirm that advocacy and community leadership are integrated and interdependent with other functions within the overarching approach to destination management. Advocacy interrelates with capacity building, market research, destination planning, and destination marketing, as functions of destination management and by influencing each of them in a reciprocal manner. Community leadership has similar ties with functions such as planning and marketing. Stakeholders of a destination have influence over environmental management, funding, and operations. Community leadership as a function of destination management influences capacity building, environmental management, funding, and operations of a DMO.

The findings from the research did not confirm that operations and environmental management as functions of destination management interrelate with advocacy in a similar manner, as synthesised from the literature. The same applies for community leadership interrelating with capacity building and environmental management. The research highlighted that community leadership additionally influences the operations and funding of a DMO. The interview data did not suggest any connection between community leadership and destination related market research.

These findings of the research are summarised in the revised “Framework of Advocacy and Community Leadership as functions of Destination Management” (Figure 7.1). This framework presents how different functions are interconnected and influenced by advocacy and community leadership, while creating the interface between stakeholders and the region the destination is situated in. It also reflects the applied aspects of advocacy and community leadership.

## REFERENCES

- Albrecht, J.N. (2010). Towards a framework for tourism strategy Implementation. *International Journal of Tourism Policy*, 3 (3), pp. 181-200. DOI: 10.1504/IJTP.2010.037991
- Albrecht, J.N. (2013). Networking for sustainable tourism - towards a research agenda. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21 (5), pp. 639-657. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2012.721788
- Almeida García, F., Balbuena Vázquez A., & Cortés Macías, R. (2015). Resident's attitudes towards the impacts of tourism. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 13, pp. 33-40. DOI: 10.1016/j.tmp.2014.11.002
- Almeida-García, F., Peláez-Fernández, M.A., Balbuena-Vázquez, A., & Cortés-Macias, R. (2016). Residents' perceptions of tourism development in Benalmádena (Spain). *Tourism Management*, 54, pp. 259-274. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2015.11.007
- Alumäe, T. (2014). *Recent improvements in Estonian LVCSR*. Paper presented at SLTU-2014, St. Petersburg, Russia . [https://www.isca-speech.org/archive/sltu\\_2014/papers/sl14\\_118.pdf](https://www.isca-speech.org/archive/sltu_2014/papers/sl14_118.pdf) (Accessed 15 September 2018).
- Andereck, K.L., Valentine, K.M., Knopf, R.C., & Vogt, C.A. (2005). Residents' perceptions of community tourism impacts. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32 (4), pp. 1056-1076. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2005.03.001
- Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: An analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 1 (3), pp. 385-405. DOI: 10.1177/146879410100100307
- Baggio, R., & Cooper, C. (2010). Knowledge transfer in a tourism destination: The effects of a network structure. *Service Industries Journal*, 30 (10), pp. 1757-1771. DOI: 10.1080/02642060903580649
- Baggio, R., Scott, N., & Cooper, C. (2010). Improving tourism destination governance: a complexity science approach. *Tourism Review*, 65 (4), pp. 51-60. DOI: 10.1108/16605371011093863
- Beaumont, N., & Dredge, D. (2010). Local tourism governance: A comparison of three network approaches. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 18 (1), pp. 7-28. DOI: 10.1080/09669580903215139

- Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 15 (2), pp. 219-234. DOI: 10.1177/1468794112468475
- Beritelli, P., & Bieger, T. (2014). From destination governance to destination leadership - defining and exploring the significance with the help of a systemic perspective. *Tourism Review*, 69 (1), pp. 25-46. DOI: 10.1108/TR-07-2013-0043
- Beritelli, P., & Laesser, C. (2011). Power dimensions and influence reputation in tourist destinations: Empirical evidence from a network of actors and stakeholders. *Tourism Management*, 32 (6), pp. 1299-1309. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2010.12.010
- Beritelli, P., Bieger, T., & Laesser, C. (2014). The New Frontiers of Destination Management: Applying Variable Geometry as a Function-Based Approach. *Journal of Travel Research*, 53 (4), pp. 403-417. DOI: 10.1177/0047287513506298
- Beritelli, P., Buffa, F., & Martini, U. (2015). The coordinating DMO or coordinators in the DMO? – an alternative perspective with the help of network analysis. *Tourism Review*, 70 (1), pp. 24-42. DOI: 10.1108/TR-04-2014-0018
- Beritelli, P., Buffa, F., & Martini, U. (2016). Logics and interlocking directorships in a multi-stakeholder system. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 5 (2), pp. 107-116. DOI: 10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.11.005
- Bornhorst, T., Ritchie, J.R., & Sheehan, L. (2010). Determinants of tourism success for DMOs & destinations: An empirical examination of stakeholders' perspectives. *Tourism Management*, 31 (5), pp. 572-589. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2009.06.008
- Borzyszkowski, J. (2015). *The past, present and future of Destination Management Organizations (DMO) – The example of National Tourism Organizations (NTO)*. Proceedings of the 9<sup>th</sup> International Management Conference 'Management and Innovation for Competitive Advantage', November 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Bucharest, Romania. <http://conferinta.management.ase.ro/archives/2015/> (Accessed 10 July 2018).
- Borzyszkowski, J., & Marczak, M. (2011). Objectives and tasks of national tourism organizations (NTOs): examples of selected European post-communist countries. *E-Review of Tourism Research*, 9(2), 47-64.
- Botterill, D., & Platenkamp, V. (2012). *Key Concept in Tourism Research*. London, UK: SAGE Publications
- Boukas, N., & Ziakas, V. (2016). Tourism policy and residents' well-being in Cyprus: Opportunities and challenges for developing an inside-out destination

- management approach. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 5 (1), pp. 44-54. DOI: 10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.12.004
- Brookes, S., & Grint, K. (2010). *The New Public Leadership Challenge*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. DOI: 10.1057/9780230277953
- Brotherton, B. (2015). *Researching Hospitality and Tourism*. London, UK: SAGE Publications
- Burgess-Allen, J., & Owen-Smith, V. (2010). Using mind mapping techniques for rapid qualitative data analysis in public participation processes. *Health Expectations*, 13 (4), pp. 406-415. DOI: 10.1111/j.1369-7625.2010.00594.x
- Campón-Cerro, A.M., Folgado-Fernández, J.A., & Hernández-Mogollón, J.M. (2017). Rural destination development based on olive oil tourism: The impact of residents' community attachment and quality of life on their support for tourism development. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 9 (9), art. no. 1624. DOI: 10.3390/su9091624
- Currie, C., & Falconer, P. (2014). Maintaining sustainable island destinations in Scotland: The role of the transport-tourism relationship. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 3 (3), pp. 162-172. DOI: 10.1016/j.jdmm.2013.10.005
- Davies, M. (2011). Concept mapping, mind mapping and argument mapping: What are the differences and do they matter? *Higher Education*, 62 (3), pp. 279-301. DOI: 10.1007/s10734-010-9387-6
- Dredge, D. (2006a). Policy networks and the local organisation of tourism. *Tourism Management*, 27 (2), pp. 269-280. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2004.10.003
- Dredge, D. (2006b). Networks, conflict and collaborative communities. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 14 (6), pp. 562-581. DOI: 10.2167/jost567.0
- Dredge, D. (2016). Are DMOs on a path to redundancy? *Tourism Recreation Research*, 41 (3), pp. 348-353. DOI: 10.1080/02508281.2016.1195959
- Dwyer, L. (2018). Saluting while the ship sinks: the necessity for tourism paradigm change. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 26 (1), pp. 29-48. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2017.1308372
- Dwyer, L., & Kim, C. (2003). Destination competitiveness: Determinants and indicators. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 6 (5), pp. 369-414. DOI: 10.1080/13683500308667962
- Enterprise Estonia. (2018a). *Eesti ja Euroopa turism 2017*. [https://static2.visitestonia.com/docs/3212006\\_eesti-turism2017.pdf](https://static2.visitestonia.com/docs/3212006_eesti-turism2017.pdf) (Accessed 10 October 2018).

- Enterprise Estonia. (2018b). *Hooajalisus Eesti turismis*.  
[https://static2.visitestonia.com/docs/3210264\\_hooajalisus2017.pdf](https://static2.visitestonia.com/docs/3210264_hooajalisus2017.pdf) (Accessed 10 October 2018).
- Enterprise Estonia. (2018c). *EASi Turismiarenduskeskuse direktoriks sai Margus Sameli*. <https://www.eas.ee/easi-turismiarenduskeskuse-direktoriks-sai-margus-sameli/> (Accessed 10 September 2018).
- Enterprise Estonia. (2018d). *Tourism in Estonia in 2017*.  
[https://static1.visitestonia.com/docs/3198419\\_tourism-in-estonia-2017.pdf](https://static1.visitestonia.com/docs/3198419_tourism-in-estonia-2017.pdf)  
 (Accessed 10 October 2018).
- Enterprise Estonia. (2019). 2018 Tourism in Numbers. Presentation by Margus Sameli on 07 February 2019 in Tallinn.  
[https://static1.visitestonia.com/docs/3327773\\_tourest-2019-margus-sameli.pptx](https://static1.visitestonia.com/docs/3327773_tourest-2019-margus-sameli.pptx)  
 (Accessed 15 February 2019).
- Esfehiani, H.M., & Walters, T. (2018). Lost in translation? Cross-language thematic analysis in tourism and hospitality research. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30 (11), pp.3158-3174. DOI: 10.1108/IJCHM-10-2017-0701
- Farjoun, M., Ansell, C., Boin, A. (2015). Pragmatism in organization studies: Meeting the challenges of a dynamic and complex world. *Organization Science*, 26 (6), pp. 1787-1804. DOI: 10.1287/orsc.2015.1016
- Fernández-Tabales, A., Foronda-Robles, C., Galindo-Pérez-de-Azpillaga, L., & García-López, A. (2017). Developing a system of territorial governance indicators for tourism destinations. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 25 (9), pp. 1275-1305. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2016.1260136
- Gopalan, R., & Narayan, B. (2010). Improving customer experience in tourism: A framework for stakeholder collaboration. *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*, 44 (2), pp. 100-112. DOI: 10.1016/j.seps.2009.11.001
- Gursoy, D., & Rutherford, D.G. (2004). Host attitudes toward tourism: An improved structural model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31 (3), pp. 495-516. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2003.08.008
- Hall, C.M. (1999). Rethinking collaboration and partnership: A public policy perspective. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 7 (3-4), pp. 274-289. DOI: 10.1080/09669589908667340
- Hall, C.M. (2011). Policy learning and policy failure in sustainable tourism governance: From first- and second-order to third-order change? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19 (4-5), pp. 649-671. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2011.555555
- Harrill, R. (2004). Residents' attitudes toward tourism development: A literature review with implications for tourism planning. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 18 (3), pp. 251-266. DOI: 10.1177/0885412203260306

- Hartley, J. (2010). Political Leadership. In S. Brookes & K. Grint, *The New Public Leadership Challenge* (pp. 133-149). London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. DOI: 10.1057/9780230277953
- Hoppe, B., & Reinelt, C. (2010). Social network analysis and the evaluation of leadership networks. *Leadership Quarterly*, 21 (4), pp. 600-619. DOI: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.06.004
- Houghton, C., Casey, D., Shaw, D., & Murphy, K. (2013). Rigour in qualitative case-study research. *Nurse researcher*, 20 (4), pp.12-17. DOI: 10.7748/nr2013.03.20.4.12.e326
- Hristov, D., & Zehrer, A. (2015). The destination paradigm continuum revisited: DMOs serving as leadership networks. *Tourism Review*, 70 (2), pp. 116-131. DOI: 10.1108/TR-08-2014-0050
- Huh, C., & Vogt, C.A. (2008). Changes in residents' attitudes toward tourism over time: A cohort analytical approach. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46 (4), pp. 446-455. DOI: 10.1177/0047287507308327
- Kozak, M., Volgger, M., & Pechlaner, H. (2014). Destination leadership: Leadership for territorial development. *Tourism Review*, 69 (3), pp. 169-172. DOI: 10.1108/TR-05-2014-0021
- Laesser, C., & Beritelli, P. (2013). St. Gallen Consensus on Destination Management. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 2 (1), pp. 46-49. DOI: 10.1016/j.jdmm.2012.11.003
- Laws, E., Agrusa, J., Scott, N., & Richins, H. (2011). Tourist destination governance: Practice, theory and issues. In Laws, E., Agrusa, J., Scott, N. & Richins, H., *Tourist Destination Governance: Practice, Theories and Issues* (pp. 1-13). Oxfordshire, UK: Cab International.
- Lew, A. A., & Cheer, J. M. (2018). *Tourism Resilience and Adaptation to Environmental Change*. Oxon, UK: Routledge.
- Lindstrom, K.N., & Larson, M. (2016). Community-based tourism in practice: Evidence from three coastal communities in Bohuslan, Sweden. *Bulletin of Geography*, 33 (33), pp. 71-78. DOI: 10.1515/bog-2016-0025
- Long, T., & Johnson, M. (2000). Rigour, reliability and validity in qualitative research. *Clinical Effectiveness in Nursing*, 4(1), pp. 30-37. DOI: 10.1054/cein.2000.0106
- Martín, H.S., de los Salmones Sánchez, M.M.G., & Herrero, Á. (2018). Residents' attitudes and behavioural support for tourism in host communities. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 35 (2), pp. 231-243. DOI: 10.1080/10548408.2017.1357518



- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. (2013). *Eesti riiklik turismiarenduskava 2014-2020*.  
<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akti/3191/1201/3015/lisa.pdf#> (Accessed 14 April 2018).
- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. (2016). *Eesti riiklik turismiarenduskava 2014-2020. Rakendusplaani aruanne 2016*.  
[https://www.mkm.ee/sites/default/files/riikliku\\_turismiarenduskava\\_2016\\_rp\\_aruanne.xlsx](https://www.mkm.ee/sites/default/files/riikliku_turismiarenduskava_2016_rp_aruanne.xlsx) (Accessed 14 April 2018).
- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. (2017). *Eesti riiklik turismiarenduskava 2014-2020. Rakendusplaani aruanne 2017*.  
[https://www.mkm.ee/sites/default/files/riikliku\\_turismiarenduskava\\_rakendusplaan\\_2017\\_mkm.xlsx](https://www.mkm.ee/sites/default/files/riikliku_turismiarenduskava_rakendusplaan_2017_mkm.xlsx) (Accessed 14 April 2018).
- Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. (2018). *Eesti riiklik turismiarenduskava 2014-2020. Rakenduskava 2018-2020*.  
[https://www.mkm.ee/sites/default/files/riikliku\\_turismiarenduskava\\_2016\\_rp\\_aruanne.xlsx](https://www.mkm.ee/sites/default/files/riikliku_turismiarenduskava_2016_rp_aruanne.xlsx) (Accessed 14 April 2018).
- Morrison, A. M. (2013). *Marketing and managing tourism destinations*. New York, USA: Routledge.
- Moscardo, G. (2011). Exploring social representations of tourism planning: Issues for governance. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19 (4-5), pp. 423-436. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2011.558625
- North-Estonia Tourism. (2006). *Sihtasutuse Põhja-Eesti Turism Põhikiri*.  
<http://www.northeastonia.ee/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/PET-põhikiri.pdf>  
 (Accessed 14 April 2018).
- Nowell, L.S., Norris, J.M., White, D.E., & Moules, N.J. (2017). Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16 (1). DOI: 10.1177/1609406917733847
- Nunkoo, R., & Gursoy, D. (2016). Rethinking The Role of Power and Trust in Tourism Planning. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management*, 25 (4), pp. 512-522. DOI: 10.1080/19368623.2015.1019170
- Nunkoo, R., & Smith, S.L.J. (2013). Political economy of tourism: Trust in government actors, political support, and their determinants. *Tourism Management*, 36, pp. 120-132. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2012.11.018
- Nunkoo, R., & So, K.K.F. (2016). Residents' Support for Tourism: Testing Alternative Structural Models. *Journal of Travel Research*, 55 (7), pp. 847-861. DOI: 10.1177/0047287515592972
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2017). *OECD Economic Surveys: Estonia 2017*. Paris, France: OECD Publishing. DOI: 10.1787/eco\_surveys-est-2017-en

- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2018). *OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2018*. Paris, France: OECD Publishing. DOI: 10.1787/20767773
- Paddison, B., & Biggins, R. (2017). Advocating community integrated destination marketing planning in heritage destinations: the case of York. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 33 (9-10), pp. 835-857. DOI: 10.1080/0267257X.2017.1329226
- Palmer, A., Koenig-Lewis, N., & Medi Jones, L.E. (2013). The effects of residents' social identity and involvement on their advocacy of incoming tourism. *Tourism Management*, 38, pp. 142-151. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2013.02.019
- Patton, Q. M. (2015). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice. Fourth Edition*. California, USA: SAGE Publications
- Pearce, D.G. (2015). Destination management in New Zealand: Structures and functions. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 4 (1), pp. 1-12. DOI: 10.1016/j.jdmm.2014.12.001
- Pearce, D.G. (2016a). Destination management: plans and practitioners' perspectives in New Zealand. *Tourism Planning and Development*, 13 (1), pp. 52-71. DOI: 10.1080/21568316.2015.1076511
- Pearce, D.G. (2016b). Interdependent destination management functions. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 41 (1), pp. 37-48. DOI: 10.1080/02508281.2015.1119433
- Pechlaner, H., Kozak, M., & Volgger, M. (2014). Destination leadership: A new paradigm for tourist destinations? *Tourism Review*, 69 (1), pp. 1-9. DOI: 10.1108/TR-09-2013-0053
- Pechlaner, H., Volgger, M., & Herntrei, M. (2012). Destination management organizations as interface between destination governance and corporate governance. *Anatolia*, 23 (2), pp. 151-168. DOI: 10.1080/13032917.2011.652137
- Pike, S. (2004). *Destination Marketing Organisations*. London, UK: Elsevier.
- Pike, S. (2016). *Destination Marketing Essentials (Second Edition)*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Pike, S., & Page, S.J. (2014). Destination Marketing Organizations and destination marketing: A narrative analysis of the literature *Tourism Management*, 41, pp. 202-227. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2013.09.009
- Pikkemaat, B., Peters, M., & Chan, C.-S. (2018). Needs, drivers and barriers of innovation: The case of an alpine community-model destination. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 25, pp. 53-63. DOI: 10.1016/j.tmp.2017.11.004

- Reinhold, S., Laesser, C., & Beritelli, P. (2018). The 2016 St. Gallen Consensus on Advances in Destination Management. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 8, pp. 426-431. DOI: 10.1016/j.jdmm.2017.03.001
- Sainaghi, R. (2006). From contents to processes: Versus a dynamic destination management model (DDMM). *Tourism Management*, 27 (5), pp. 1053-1063. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2005.09.010
- Sharpley, R. (2014). Host perceptions of tourism: A review of the research. *Tourism Management*, 42, pp. 37-49. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2013.10.007
- South-Estonia Tourism. (2014). *Sihtasutuse Lõuna-Eesti Turism Põhikiri*. <http://www.lounaesti.ee/images/SALEtpk.pdf> (Accessed 14 April 2018).
- Statistics Estonia. (2018). *PO021: POPULATION BY SEX AND AGE GROUP, 1 JANUARY*. Query made on 22 July 2018 via: <http://pub.stat.ee/>
- Su, L., Huang, S.S., & Pearce, J. (2018). How does destination social responsibility contribute to environmentally responsible behaviour? A destination resident perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 86, pp. 179-189. DOI: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.02.011
- Timur, S., & Getz, D. (2008). A network perspective on managing stakeholders for sustainable urban tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 20 (4), pp. 445-461. DOI: 10.1108/09596110810873543
- United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). (2016). *Report of the Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness*. <http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/docpdf/generalprogrammeofworkdmgmt.pdf> (Accessed 14 April 2018).
- Valente, F., Dredge, D., & Lohmann, G. (2015). Leadership and governance in regional tourism. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 4 (2), pp. 127-136. DOI: 10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.03.005
- Volgger, M., & Pechlaner, H. (2014). Requirements for destination management organizations in destination governance: Understanding DMO success. *Tourism Management*, 41, 64-75. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2013.09.001
- Walters, T. (2016). Using thematic analysis in tourism research. *Tourism Analysis*, 21 (1), pp. 107-116. DOI: 10.3727/108354216X14537459509017
- West-Estonia Tourism (2013). *Mittetulundusühingu Lääne-Eesti Turism Põhikiri*. [https://www.westestonia.ee/uploads/media/MTUE\\_Laeaene-Eesti\\_Turism\\_pohikiri\\_2013.pdf](https://www.westestonia.ee/uploads/media/MTUE_Laeaene-Eesti_Turism_pohikiri_2013.pdf) (Accessed 14 April 2018).
- Wiederhold, A. (2015). Conducting fieldworks at and away from home: shifting researcher positionality with mobile interviewing methods. *Qualitative Research*, 15 (5), pp. 600-615. DOI: 10.1177/1468794114550440

- World Tourism Organisation (WTO). (2007). *A practical guide to tourism destination management*. Madrid, Spain: World Tourism Organisation
- Zach, F., & Fesenmaier, D.R. (2016). *Innovative Behavior of Destination Marketing Organizations*. Paper presented at the Tourism Travel and Research Association: Advancing Tourism Research Globally. 30.  
<http://scholarworks.umass.edu/6ra/2010/Oral/30> (Accessed 20 May 2018).
- Zehrer, A., Raich, F., Siller, H., & Tschiderer, F. (2014). Leadership networks in destinations. *Tourism Review*, 69 (1), pp. 59-73. DOI: 10.1108/TR-06-2013-0037

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1. INTERVIEW GUIDELINE**

*This is an interview guideline used for collecting qualitative data within the research. Interview questions and agenda were tailored to fit the area of expertise of the participant.*

1. How do you see the connection and relationship between tourism destination and region?
2. What is your experience with engaging with wider local community as part of destination management and development?
3. Do you observe any community leadership in your interactions with local communities? If so, in what ways?
4. What does your organisation do in order to increase knowledge of tourism, be mutually heard and lead the local community?
5. How and what other functions of destination management are interrelated/connected/relevant/influenced by community leadership?
6. What is your experience with engaging with stakeholders (tourism industry, authorities, interested networks of stakeholders) as part destination management and development?
7. Do you observe any advocacy in your interactions with stakeholders? If so, in what ways?

8. What does your organisation do in order to engage, be mutually heard and advocate for these stakeholders?
9. How and what other functions of destination management are interrelated/connected/relevant/influenced by advocacy?
10. How is your organisation involved in coordination of destination management between national, regional, local levels and with TIO; implementation of National Tourism Development plan? Does this cooperation involve activities related to advocacy and community leadership? What could be improved, with advocacy and community leadership in mind, for more successful cooperation?

## APPENDIX 2. FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Which of the following activities does your organisation implement and how often they are implemented annually:

	Host Community	Stakeholders
Communications		
Outreach to local media outlets		
Public talks/seminars		
Awareness campaigns		
Websites (owned)		
Discounted off season visits/site-visits		
Other (please name)		

## APPENDIX 3. INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

18/080, 22 June 2018



### **Advocacy and community leadership in destination management.**

#### **INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS.**

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate I thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you, and I thank you for considering my request.

#### **What is the Aim of the Project?**

This study focuses on destination management practices in Estonia in the context of National Tourism Development Plan. It addresses the various components of destination management and how destinations and their territories relate. Specifically, it investigates the roles of advocacy and community leadership in tourism destination management and their interdependency to other functions within the destination management.

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for Andrus Nõmm's Masters of Commerce degree at the Department of Tourism within the School of Business.

#### **What Type of Participants are being sought?**

The expected number of research participants will be 12 persons in Estonia. Participants will be selected based on their organisational tasks and relevance in implementing the National Tourism Development Plan and related action plans.

#### **What will Participants be Asked to Do?**

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to take part in a semi-structured interview of about one and a half hours. Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself.

#### **What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?**

All interview questions address destination management practices in Estonia; no personal questions will be asked of interviewees. Interviews will be digitally recorded with your permission. The digital files will be stored electronically in the University data centres. Only



the researcher and supervisors will have access to the raw data. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least 5 years in secure storage.

The results of the project may be published in aggregated form. Every effort will be made to ensure that the results are presented in ways that protect the anonymity of study participants. Due to the nature of the research, whereby interviewees are selected based on their professional or formal roles in destination management, it may not be possible for your anonymity to be preserved in the completed research. The results will be published and copies of research outputs will be made available upon request to the participants of the study.

This project involves a semi-structured questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes destination management practices: the role of advocacy and community leadership in destination management; how advocacy and community leadership relate to destination marketing, product development, environment management, planning, consultation; experience of implementing these function in destination management; destination management strategies. The precise nature of all questions, which will be asked, has not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently, although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used.

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s).

### **Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?**

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

### **What if Participants have any Questions?**

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Andrus Nõmmand      Dr Julia N Albrecht  
Researcher/Student      Supervisor

Department of Tourism

Department of Tourism

Email [noman529@student.otago.ac.nz](mailto:noman529@student.otago.ac.nz)

Email [julia.albrecht@otago.ac.nz](mailto:julia.albrecht@otago.ac.nz)

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email [gary.witte@otago.ac.nz](mailto:gary.witte@otago.ac.nz)). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

## APPENDIX 4. CONSENT FORM

18/080, 22 June 2018



### **Advocacy and community leadership in destination management.**

#### **CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS**

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
2. I am free to withdraw from the project before its completion;
3. Personal identifying information e.g. audio recordings may be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;
4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes practices in destination management. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.
5. The results of the project may be published in aggregated form and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand).
6. Due to the nature of the research, whereby interviewees are selected based on their professional or formal roles in destination management, it may not be possible for my anonymity to be preserved in the completed research outputs.

I agree to take part in this project.

(Signature of participant)

(Date)

(Printed Name)

Name of person taking consent

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email [gary.witte@otago.ac.nz](mailto:gary.witte@otago.ac.nz)). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

## APPENDIX 5. APPLICATION FOR UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO ETHICS COMMITTEE



### UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO HUMAN ETHICS COMMITTEE APPLICATION FORM: CATEGORY A

Form updated: October 2017

1. **University of Otago staff member responsible for project:**  
Dr Julia N. Albrecht
2. **Department/School:**  
Department of Tourism, School of Business
3. **Contact details of staff member responsible** (*always include your email address*):  
Phone 03 479 5441 [julia.albrecht@otago.ac.nz](mailto:julia.albrecht@otago.ac.nz)
4. **Title of project:**  
Advocacy and community leadership in destination management.
5. **Indicate project type and names of other investigators and students:**

<b>Staff Co-investigators</b>	<b>Names:</b>	Brent Lovelock
<b>Student Researchers</b>	<b>Names:</b>	Andrus Nõmm
<b>Level of Study (PhD, Masters, Hons):</b>		Masters
6. **Is this a repeated class teaching activity?** NO
7. **Fast-Track procedure** NO

**8. When will recruitment and data collection commence?**

August 2018

**What is the planned conclusion date of the study?**

February 2019

**Note: At the conclusion (final write up) of the study a Final Report must be submitted to the Committee. The Final Report template can be found on the [Human Ethics Web Page](#)**

**9. Funding of project**

Is the project to be funded by an external grant?

NO

**10. Will researchers be travelling overseas in order to conduct the research?**

YES

If YES is permission, or ethical approval, required to conduct the research in the country or countries to be visited?

NO

**11. Brief description in lay terms of the purpose of the project (approx. 75 words):**

Some elements and functions of destination management (like destination marketing and branding) have been thoroughly researched but there is a need to further understand how these elements connect, and how destinations and their territories relate. This research addresses a recently proposed comprehensive conceptual framework of interdependent destination management functions (Pearce, 2016b). It focuses on the roles of advocacy and community leadership in tourism destination management and their interdependency with other functions within the overarching approach to destination management.

**12. Aim and description of project (include the research questions the project intends to answer, and the overall implications and benefits of the research):**

The research aims to explore how practitioners conceptualise and think about advocacy and community leadership in the context of their overarching approach to destination management. Research participants are stakeholders who are implementing the National Tourism Development Plan in Estonia. Qualitative research will be carried out in order to assess the attitudes, opinions and behaviour of the relevant stakeholders. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted in order to collect data around the following research questions:

- What is the role of advocacy and community leadership in destination

management?

- How are these functions and other components of destination management interrelated in a case where destination management is implemented as an overarching approach at a national level?

The research contributes to our understanding of how different tourism destinations and sets of stakeholders are involved in national level destination management.

**13. Researcher/instructor experience and qualifications in this research area** *(include information regarding the principal investigator (or supervisor), co-investigators and students (if relevant) involved with the project):*

Dr Julia N. Albrecht is a Senior Lecturer in Tourism at the Department of Tourism. Her teaching covers introductions to the destination concept, destination planning and management, as well as tourism product development. Although she publishes in high-ranking academic journals, Julia's research also has a strong applied focus.

Assoc. Professor Brent Lovelock has researched and taught destination management for 17 years. He has supervised 11 PhDs to completion in the area of destination management and published 24 journal articles on aspects of community development and destination management.

Andrus Nõmm is a Masters by Research student at the Department of Tourism within the Otago Business School. Andrus has over 15 years of senior level experience actively building up a tourism destination at the national level in Estonia. His career has taken him to analyse opportunities for international and national cooperation between the stakeholders as well as to promote innovation based on the capacity, source markets and product development within tourism sector. Long-term experience in destination management gives Andrus a solid background to understand associated tourism theories and concepts.

**14. Participants**

**14(a) Population from which participants are drawn:**

Destination management stakeholders – that is managers, policy makers and employees from organisations that have an interest in destination management in Estonia. This may include governmental, non-governmental and private sector organisations.

**14(b) Inclusion and exclusion criteria:**

The group of research participants would be a representative and comprehensive set of stakeholders involved with the National Tourism Development Plan. Purposive sampling will be used as participants are chosen dependent on their organisational tasks and relevance in implementing the National Tourism Development Plan and related action plans in Estonia. Additional participants may be recruited through snowballing (i.e., by asking research participants for other potential key informants).

The views of tourists and residents will not be included in this study.

**14(c) Estimated number of participants:**

Approximately 12-15 participants as described above will be sought. The approximate number of expected participants is based on the territorial size, overall population and the number of destination management stakeholders in Estonia. The absolute number of participants will be finally determined by the quality of data emerging from interviews and the potential to generate conceptual generalisations.

**14(d) Age range of participants:**

20 and over.

**14(e) Method of recruitment:**

Participants will be recruited through direct email or telephone contact using their official work contact details.

**14(f) Will any form of compensation be offered to participants for taking part in the research?**

No. Participants are selected based on their professional or formal roles, in the local business context it is not customary to provide compensation if the interviews are focused around participants' work related tasks and views.

**15. Methods and Procedures:**

This study will explore and document the experiences of a range of participants in destination management in the case study site of Estonia. Qualitative research will be carried out in order to explore the research questions and to assess the attitudes, opinions and behaviour of the relevant stakeholders. Semi-structured interviews are chosen as the research method for this project as these offer an in-depth exploration of the research questions. The interviews will be carried out face-to-face. If the interviewees are not available for face-to-face meetings (travelling etc.) the interviews will be held via video-conferencing (Skype or Facetime, etc.).

Potential themes that may be included in the interviews: the role of advocacy and community leadership in destination management; how advocacy and community leadership relate to destination marketing, product development, environment management, planning, consultation; experience of implementing destination management as an overarching concept; destination management strategies; and national/ local tensions linked to destination management practices.

Data analysis: All interviews will be digitally recorded with the participant's written consent (see below) and transcribed. Recognised qualitative analysis techniques will

be used to analyse and elicit key themes from the interview data. The process of data analysis will be inductive and data-led. The analysis will start with coding emerging themes on the interview transcripts. Coding will proceed through examining each line of data and identifying actions or events within it. Common themes and sub-categories will be noted. Analysis of the interview data will employ an interpretive approach, and use the constant comparison method; participants' views, situations, experiences and practices will be constantly compared with one another. After all the relevant points have been synthesised from the data, the transcripts will be re-read to ensure that all the important aspects of the phenomena have been accounted for.

**16. Compliance with The Privacy Act 1993 and the Health Information Privacy Code 1994 imposes strict requirements concerning the collection, use and disclosure of personal information. The questions below allow the Committee to assess compliance.**

**16(a) Are you collecting and storing personal information (e.g.name, contact details, designation, position etc) directly from the individual concerned that could identify the individual?**

YES

**16(b) Are you collecting information about individuals from another source?**

NO

**16(c) Collecting Personal Information:**

- Will you be collecting personal information (e.g. name, contact details, position, company, anything that could identify the individual)?

YES

- Will you inform participants of the purpose for which you are collecting the information and the uses you propose to make of it?

YES

- Will you inform participants of who will receive the information?

YES

- Will you inform participants of the consequences, if any, of not supplying the information?

YES

- Will you inform participants of their rights of access to and correction of personal information?



YES

**16(d) Outline your data storage, security procedures and length of time data will be kept :**

The interviews will be transcribed and erased from the digital voice recorders after they have been uploaded via Syncplicity Sync and Share to University of Otago data centres. During data analysis, all original data and transcribed data will be accessible only to the researcher (A.Nömm) and supervisors (J. N. Albrecht, B. Lovelock). The data will be stored only electronically at University of Otago centres via Syncplicity Sync and Share. At the conclusion of the project the collected data will be stored at University of Otago data centres for 5 years: thereafter, it will be destroyed and permanently deleted by the supervisor (J. N. Albrecht). Archival of original data for 5 years is a requirement by the University of Otago.

**16(e) Who will have access to personal information, under what conditions, and subject to what safeguards? If you are obtaining information from another source, include details of how this will be accessed and include written permission if appropriate. Will participants have access to the information they have provided?**

Only the researcher will have access to the personal information, for the purpose of identifying participants if it is necessary to clarify aspects of the interviews, or if they seek copies of the research summary. Safeguards are noted above.

Participants will have the opportunity to request a research summary. Participants will be informed of this prior to data collection, through the Information Sheet.

**16(f) Do you intend to publish any personal information they have provided?**

NO

**16(g) How will you disseminate and feedback the project results at the end of the research? Please describe your plans with respect to feedback to participants as well as any public dissemination plans, e.g. in journals and conferences.**

The outcomes of the research will be part of the Masters thesis of the student researcher. Participants will have the opportunity to request a research summary. Participants will be informed of this prior to data collection, through the Information Sheet. Research outcomes may be published in academic outlets.

**16(h) Do you propose to collect demographic information to describe your sample? For example: gender, age, ethnicity, education level, etc.**

Demographic information will NOT be collected.

**16 (i) Have you, or will you, undertake Māori consultation? Choose one of the options below, and delete the option that does not apply:**

(Refer to <http://www.otago.ac.nz/research/maoriconsultation/index.html>).

NO                      This research will be undertaken in Estonia and is focussed on the destination management stakeholders and their relationships in Estonia.

**17. Does the research or teaching project involve any form of deception?**

NO

**18. Please describe the ethical issues that might arise from the proposed research and how they are to be addressed.**

No issues are anticipated. To address the potential for problems to arise during the course of the research each participant will be given an Information Sheet for Participants and Consent Form. The project's Information Sheet for Participants and Consent Form are attached.

To safeguard against the potential of placing any participants in a stressful position during the interviews they will be reminded at the beginning of the interview of their right to choose not to answer any questions and to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

Interview outcomes will be presented in ways that treat the views of individual interview participants as anonymous, the respondents are de-identified and possible identifying characteristics are separated from publicly available data. Due to the nature of the research, interviewees are selected from a small close-knit community of stakeholders based on their professional or formal roles in destination management, it may not be possible for participants' anonymity to be preserved when the completed research outputs are published and disseminated. Research participants are being made aware of this in the Information Sheet.

**19. \*Applicant's Signature:** .....  .....

**Name (please print):** Julia N. Albrecht

**Date:** ...8 May 2018.....

\*The signatory should be the staff member detailed at Question 1.

**20. Departmental approval:** *I have read this application and believe it to be valid research and ethically sound. I approve the research design. The Research proposed in this application is compatible with the University of Otago policies and I give my consent for the application to be forwarded to the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee with my recommendation that it be approved.*

**Signature of \*\*Head of Department:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Higham', written over a horizontal line.

**Name of HOD (please print):** James Higham (Department Ethics Committee)

**Date:** 7 May 2018

**\*\*Where the Head of Department is also the Applicant, then an appropriate senior staff member must sign on behalf of the Department or School.**